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on Modern Languages

VOLUME TWELVE

The Teaching of
Modern Foreign Languages in the
United States

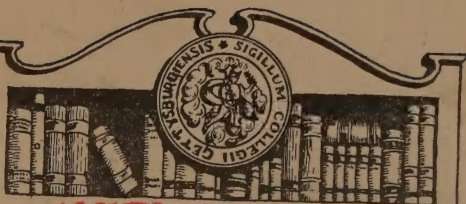
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ALGERNON COLEMAN

New York

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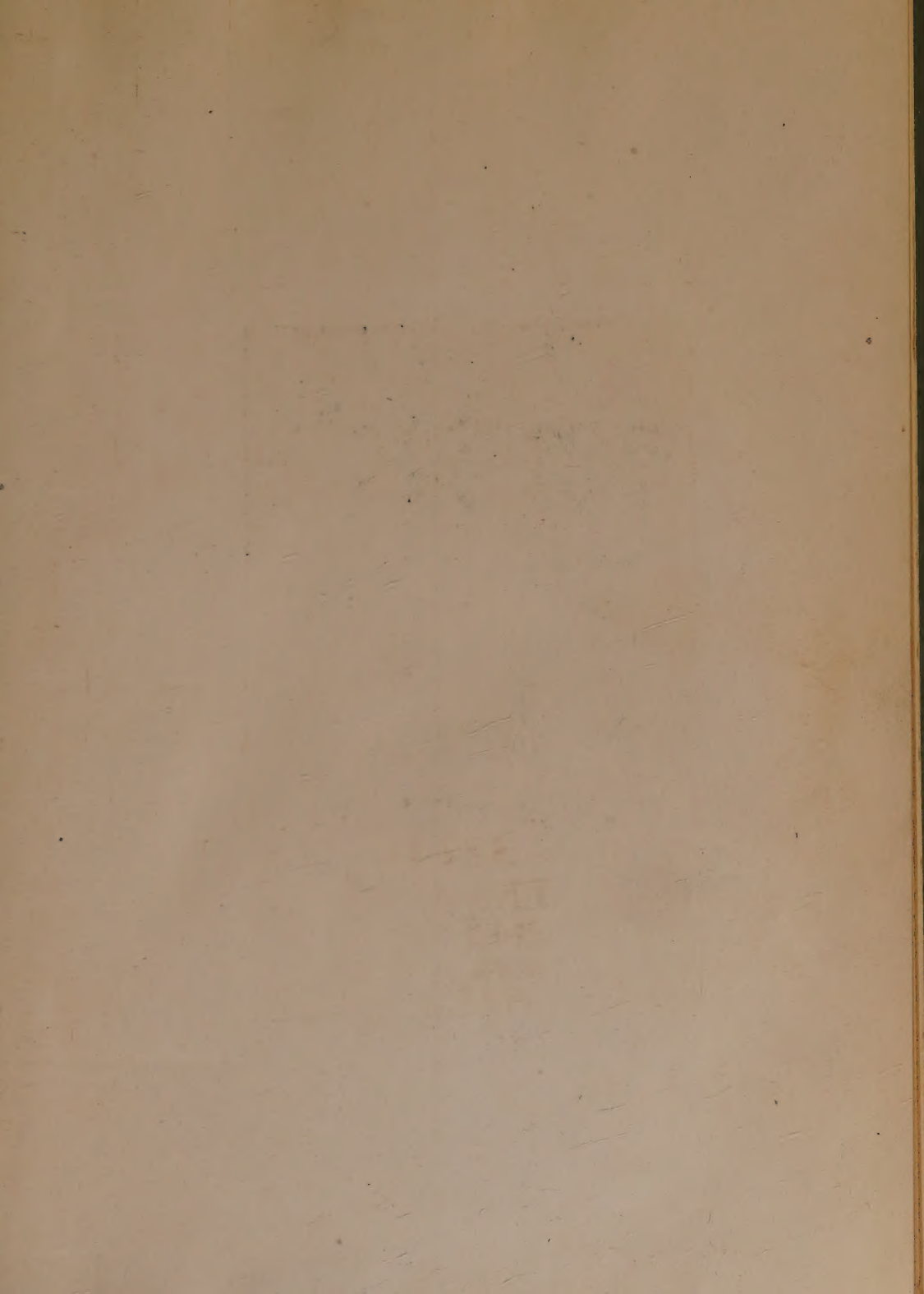
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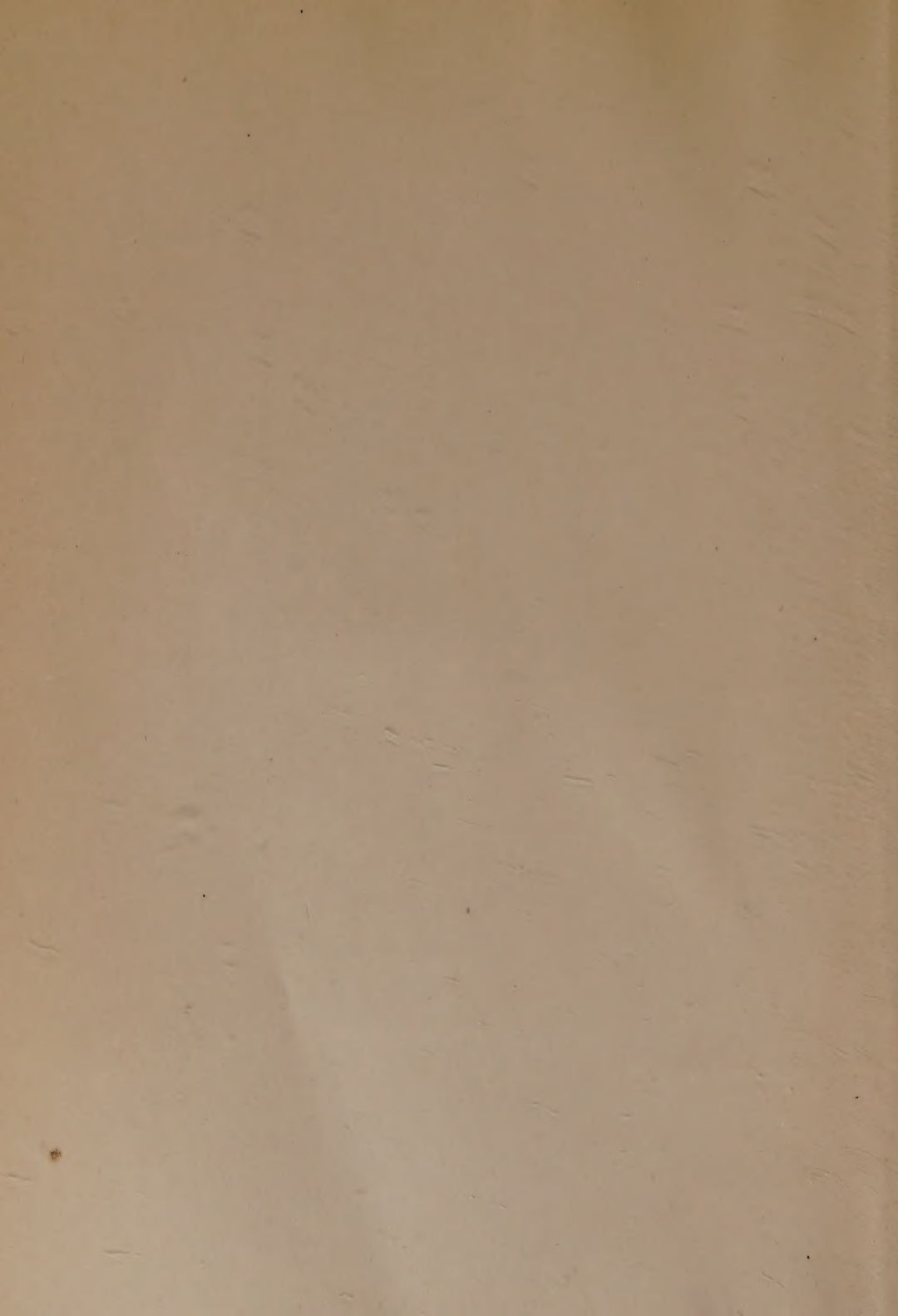
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**THE TEACHING OF MODERN FOREIGN
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The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages in the United States

A REPORT PREPARED FOR
THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

BY
ALGERNON COLEMAN
PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

New York
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1930

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FOREWORD

The report which follows brings the results of inquiries carried on by the Modern Foreign Language Study independently and in coöperation with the Canadian Committee on Modern Foreign Languages in the years 1924 to 1927, and formulates the conclusions of the Committee on Investigation as they relate to the entire field of modern language teaching. Within the range of the Committee's investigation, i.e., the secondary school and the corresponding courses in modern languages in college, the report is exhaustive for the great concerns of organized instruction: the objectives of teaching, the content of the courses, the organization of classes and the methods of instruction. For these fields, in which the activities of teacher and student of any curriculum subject are developed, Professor Coleman's work reviews and analyzes the material which the Committee has brought together and presents the deductions which are derived from this assembly of fact and opinion.

The present work is therefore a synthesis of all of the findings of the Committee with respect to teaching problems. The author has laid under tribute other reports and publications of the Committee and its collaborators, and indeed, a wide range of published and unpublished material from many sources. He does not hesitate where it seems important for the development of his argument to reintroduce tables and drawings from the Committee's reports on enrollment and on achievement and prognosis tests and from the studies of Wood and Buswell, in order that the evidence may be at hand where needed, and he has cited freely from a long list of studies and researches organized by the Committee or under its sponsorship.

In this he has followed a policy of the Committee on Investigation, which is to make no declarations and draw no conclusions without giving the evidence on which they are based. In some cases Professor Coleman's discussion rests on an experimental basis, such as that offered by the testing program on the attainment of objectives or by controlled classes on methods of accelerating the process of learning to read the foreign languages. In other instances, evidence is produced from statistical and other researches which show defects in organization, like the widespread discontinuance of foreign language study or the misplacement of pupils. In still other cases, the only evidence which it is possible to offer is the opinion of well trained and experienced teachers. The validity of each

and all of these sources can be tested, for the author has marshalled the evidence in such a way that the reader may examine it and decide for himself as to the justice of the Committee's conclusion.

Those who expect to find in the work a syllabus or outline of courses will be disappointed. In general, the reader will look in vain for detailed proposals and authoritative pronouncements. The Committee will be satisfied if it has been successful in defining the major problems of modern language teaching in this country as they concern administrator and teacher and in indicating some of the directions in which instruction must move if the foreign languages are to be members of a curriculum which shall meet the needs of the American secondary school for the next generation. It has sought to open fruitful fields of experiment in the use of tests and in the adaptation of the results of frequency studies to the curriculum and to indicate paths which promise to lead to certain desirable goals, such as the attainment of the reading objective, within a period which the social forces that determine American school and college organization now allot to modern language study. It has had to content itself with calling attention to certain fundamental problems which must remain unsolved until they can be taken in hand for long periods of experiment. Thus the Committee has felt it its duty to open the way for the exploration of the major questions of modern language teaching rather than to define the number of pages of French to be read in the junior high school or outline a two-year course in conformity with some theoretical ideal.

The report was organized and written by Professor Coleman and its conclusions reached with the advice and consent of the Committee on Investigation. Both the author and the Committee have felt it an obligation to be careful in statement and conservative in recommendation, but realize that in one instance, at least, their interpretation of the evidence brings conclusions which are at variance with the opinion of the great majority of modern language teachers. This is the recommendation for a considerably increased amount of reading in the effort to speed up the attainment of the ability to read the foreign language, universally recognized as the first objective for our students. This is the only conclusion to which the Committee on Direction and Control did not give unanimous approval, for, as will be noted below, a minority of that Committee records its dissent with this proposal. That no other difference of opinion has to be recorded, indicates a degree of unity of thinking in a Committee of twenty members that is noteworthy in view of the wide diversity of aims and practice now obtaining among modern language teachers. Indeed, through the entire inquiry both the larger Committee and its delegates in charge of the work may be said to have lived according to the motto of St. Augustine: *In necessariis, unitas; in dubiis, libertas; in omnibus, caritas.*

The thanks of the Committee on Investigation are expressed to the Carnegie Corporation for financial support of the various undertakings of the Study and to the American Council on Education for its sponsorship of the inquiry. Sincere gratitude is due to the many collaborators whose names are listed in an Appendix as having coöperated in studies and experiments. Through their aid a wealth of significant material bearing on many phases of modern language teaching has been assembled, most of which has been utilized in this and other published reports.

THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY.

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Readers of these pages must bear in mind that they represent the report of an inquiry and not a manual for teachers. The investigation has been planned and carried out in the interest of finding out how modern languages are taught, under what conditions, with what materials, toward what ends, with what success, and of ascertaining what practical changes in the prevailing situation may be profitably made. In the same spirit the writer of this report would present and interpret impartially the data that have been gathered. The members of the Committee on Investigation would have liked to produce a general report that would take up and solve *seriatim* all the most puzzling problems by which the profession is confronted. No one regrets more keenly than they that this has proved to be beyond their capacities. The Committee can only offer the documents that have been or are to be published, the other special reports, and the discussion contained in the following pages as evidence of its industry, as a specimen of its procedure and as a statement of the results at which it has arrived.

Some readers of this report will undoubtedly seek in it pronouncements on various subjects which the committee either has not taken up or has been in a position to treat only in a tentative manner. Others will as surely find here interpretations of the evidence which point to practical conclusions quite at variance with their own theory and practice of modern language teaching. This is a wholly natural situation. To the former group it may be said that the committee has purposely avoided pronouncements in cases where little or no new light was available. In the case of the second group, the position of the committee is even clearer. Such an inquiry as that undertaken by the Modern Foreign Language Study could lead to one of three types of results: to a verdict that all is for the best in the best of possible worlds; or to a demonstration that the theories and current practices of some individuals or groups are valid for the country as a whole; or to the disclosure of conditions and of facts hitherto unknown or imperfectly known, on which its findings must necessarily be based. Had a study of the material led to either of the first two possibilities, the author of this report would have had a lighter task. He would have had only to proclaim "All is well!" or to point to paths already well defined as safe roads out of the wilderness. Everything, however, has led those immediately entrusted with collecting and interpreting the

material to the third of the possible eventualities. While it may be established later, in the light of new facts, that the interpretations must be revised and that the hypotheses to which these interpretations lead must be modified, this report presents as far as it is possible the evidence that has been assembled, the interpretations of that evidence, and the hypotheses to which the whole situation points, in the expectation that it will be subjected to a critical but impartial examination from many angles. It will thus serve a useful purpose as a stage in the development of a complete and authoritative body of fact, theory and practice by which modern language teachers may be guided.

In addition to expressing the profound gratitude that the members of the Committee on Investigation owe to hundreds of their colleagues in secondary schools and in colleges throughout the country whose assistance has made it possible to gather the data on which the following report and all others of the Study are based, the writer of these lines takes this occasion to thank sincerely each of his associates on the Committee on Investigation for indispensable suggestions and criticisms, always frank and always sympathetically given. To V. A. C. Henmon he is indebted for a goodly portion of the material drawn on in Chapter III and for constant guidance in all matters pertaining to the measurement of achievement. He is indebted also to Ben D. Wood for his first glimpses of the value of scores on standardized tests in the analysis of a teaching situation and for much of the data utilized in the third chapter of this report. He is grateful to William S. Gray for valuable advice and suggestions in regard to the theory and practice of teaching reading in the vernacular. It would be ungracious not to mention in this connection Mason D. Gray and W. L. Carr of the Classical Investigation, whose hearty encouragement, valuable advice and no less valuable example were of great assistance, especially in the initial stages of the Study. Thanks are due also to the cordial and helpful coöperation of M. A. Buchanan, H. E. Ford and R. K. Hicks of the Canadian Committee, and an immense debt of gratitude is hereby gladly acknowledged to the chairman of the Study Committee, Robert Herndon Fife, whose tireless industry, tact, excellent judgment of men and of affairs, humor, scholarship and critical acumen make of him an admirable executive and presiding officer and the most helpful of fellow workers under all circumstances.

ALGERNON COLEMAN.

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THE TEACHING OF MODERN FOREIGN
LANGUAGES IN THE UNITED STATES

THE TEACHING OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

INTRODUCTION

The Modern Foreign Language Study was organized in the spring of 1924 for the purpose of making a general inquiry into the teaching and learning of modern languages in the United States. Thanks to the efforts of a number of members of the profession, the attention of the Carnegie Corporation through its President, Dr. F. P. Keppel, had been called to the need of such an investigation, and, after some conference and a discussion of plans, the trustees of the Corporation generously appropriated annually for three years a sum of money sufficient to pay the necessary expenses. The Committee on Direction and Control was then organized, an Executive Committee consisting of the chairman, the vice-chairman and the secretary was appointed, and the services of three special investigators secured. Later an advisor in educational psychology was added to the group. The organization was as follows:

Committee on Direction and Control: Josephine T. Allin, Englewood High School, Chicago, Ill.; E. C. Armstrong, Princeton University; E. B. Babcock, New York University; Mary C. Burchinal, West Philadelphia High School; J. P. W. Crawford, University of Pennsylvania, *Vice-Chairman*; R. H. Fife, Columbia University, *Chairman*; C. H. Grandgent, Harvard University; C. H. Handschin, Miami University; E. C. Hills, University of California; A. R. Hohlfeld, University of Wisconsin; Josephine W. Holt, City Schools, Richmond, Va.; H. Keniston, University of Chicago, *Secretary*; W. A. Nitze, University of Chicago; W. R. Price, N. Y. State Dept. of Education; L. A. Roux, Newark Academy; Julius Sachs, Teachers College, Columbia University; E. B. de Sauzé, City Schools, Cleveland, Ohio; W. B. Snow, City Schools, Boston, Mass.; Marian P. Whitney, Vassar College; M. A. Buchanan, University of Toronto, *Chairman Canadian Committee*.

Special Investigators: Algernon Coleman; Charles M. Purin; Carleton A. Wheeler.

Advisor in Educational Psychology: V. A. C. Henmon.

It soon became evident that the actual investigation must be in the hands of a smaller group, and a Committee on Investigation was organized, composed of the members of the Executive Committee, the three special investigators and the advisor in educational psychology.

Several things became clear at an early date. One was that the inquiry

must be limited to the secondary school and to the first and second years in college. It was also evident that as much quantitative data as possible should be secured, especially in regard to the measurement of linguistic achievement. In the next place it was patent that it would be necessary to arouse the interest and secure the assistance of large numbers of modern language teachers, of school and college administrators and of educationists. Lastly, in the case of some of the most pressing problems, it became apparent to members of the Committee that nothing short of a prolonged program of research could provide the answers to many outstanding questions, and that this inquiry could hope at best only to do some of the necessary ground breaking.

The winter and spring of 1925 were given largely to the gathering of enrollment data, to the construction and standardization of objective tests in French, German, and Spanish, which were widely administered during 1925-26 and 1926-27,¹ with highly interesting results, to the launching of special studies, to securing statements of the opinions of teachers on various questions and to formulating all projects in a more precise manner. In these and in dozens of other enterprises, indispensable aid was received from so many sources that it would be quite impracticable to enumerate here the names of the hundreds of persons who in many and diverse ways played an essential part in carrying on the undertaking. The list of projects given in the Appendix to this volume constitutes in itself a detailed statement of these activities and provides an exhibit of what the committee undertook and of the sources on which the present volume is chiefly based.

While references in the body of the volume give explicit information regarding the extent to which the various sources are used, it may be well to enumerate rapidly the studies carried on under the aegis of the committee that have been of particular value in the preparation of this discussion.

The inquiry into enrollment in secondary schools and colleges provided authoritative information on the age and the point of beginning the study of modern languages, on the actual length of the course for most students and on the distribution of students by years and by languages. The data gathered by Ben D. Wood on achievement in modern languages in New York and the geographically more comprehensive data of the same sort assembled by the Committee on Investigation of the Study provided an objective basis for an analysis of what is accomplished in modern language classes, of the results of present methods of classifying students and of the extent to which certain objectives are attained. An examination of numerous course outlines and syllabi, together with a canvass of the opinions and practices of a large number of selected secondary school and college teachers, supplied a basis for a study of various aspects of the

¹ In 1926 Italian tests were added to the group and printed, but the lack of time prevented a wide administration of these.

modern language course as it is usually found. The reports of the experiments in learning to read carried through by G. T. Buswell, Charles E. Young, and James B. Tharp were invaluable in the light they threw on course-content and on method. The investigations of the effect upon English of the study of modern languages carried on by O. H. Werner and Clifford Woody and H. Hootkins were of service in illuminating an important aspect of the question of objectives. The analyses made by Gertrude Gilman, Grace and Harry Kurz, and Margaret and John Van Horne of the cultural material in current reading texts in French and in Spanish contributed definitely to a clarification of that situation, and various studies of prognosis, which are listed in the Appendix and have been assembled and interpreted by V. A. C. Henmon, were helpful in the discussion of the selection of students.¹

As the notes to the text of this volume show, numerous general and special studies made independently of the Modern Foreign Language Study were utilized with great profit. Only two of these can be named here: the report of the Classical Investigation, Part I and the exceedingly valuable experimental study of the process of teaching youth to read a foreign language by Michael West of Dacca, India, entitled *Bilingualism*. It is moreover plainly evident in the text of the volume that constant use has been made both of the methods employed and of the results arrived at by investigators in the field of education. The Committee had frequent need of counsel and of aid from workers in this domain and has profited greatly by the sympathetic interest and the active collaboration of members of departments of education in various parts of the United States. Some of the most substantial results have been achieved by active and close personal collaboration between experts in various fields of education and specialists in modern languages, to the advantage and satisfaction of both parties. In fact it is entirely clear to members of the Committee on Investigation that such an arrangement provides the most promising basis for adequate inquiry and experimentation in all subject matter fields. Even though the educationist may be a good linguist or well versed in the sciences, he can not have the intimate feeling for the classroom situation in all its aspects which is an essential factor in all experimentation. The linguist or the English teacher, on the other hand, is usually unacquainted with the technical phases of experimental procedure in education and in applied psychology and wholly uninformed about the vast amount of research that has been carried on in this field, and it would usually not be economical for him to attempt to develop expert control of a new technique. It may be predicted, therefore, that most of the effective experimentation in secondary and college subject matter fields will be done in situations where two or more individuals, each a specialist in his own line, combine their resources, whether of knowledge and experience in the

¹ All of the investigations and activities referred to appear among the "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees on Modern Languages." Cf. the list of works prefixed to this volume.

subject-matter or of expertness in educational investigations, and work as equals. Possibilities of this sort present themselves in colleges and in universities, and in city or state school systems which have departments of educational research. Indeed it is rather a reflection both on teachers of academic subjects and on educationists that such combined attacks on mutually interesting topics have not more frequently been undertaken, and the Committee particularly invites the attention of boards of education, of school superintendents and of principals to the opportunities in this direction that already exist.

It is to be regretted that the studies of the range and frequency of occurrence of syntactic phenomena in French, German and Spanish could not be completed, that the study of college entrance and graduation requirements was not finished, and that more experimental work on the relations between reading and grammar and composition and oral work in learning a foreign language could not be instituted. The obstacles in the way of these undertakings were numerous and varied, but they will eventually be swept aside by future workers in the field. The outlook for the prosecution of some of these projects is wholly favorable.

The Committee on Investigation enumerated in a report of progress to the Committee on Direction and Control on December 31, 1925, the questions, seven in number, which must eventually be answered for modern languages — and for all other secondary school subjects.

1. Who should and who should not study modern languages?
2. When should the subject be begun?
3. What is the minimum time below which the study of a modern language is unprofitable?
4. What should be, in language abilities and in other ways, the specific objectives of the course for the three chief groups involved under present conditions:
 - (a) Those who study one year at most?
 - (b) Those who study two years at most?
 - (c) Those who study three years or more?
5. What should be the content of the course by years (grammar, vocabulary, reading matter, cultural content) for each of the three groups of students?
6. What classroom procedure must be followed in order that the objectives may be attained in the largest number of cases?
7. What standards of achievement may be reasonably expected at the various stages?

Not even the most sanguine members of the Committee expected the investigation to yield satisfactory answers to all these questions. Much remains to be done before any of them can be considered as definitely settled, but some real progress has been made. We now have abundant data regarding the time at which modern languages are actually begun and the length of time through which they are studied. We know in

reasonably objective and comparable terms what is being achieved in the schools and colleges of the country in terms of grammar, composition, vocabulary and reading and we have exhibits from selected schools that provide an index of our best accomplishment under present circumstances. We are in possession of valuable studies of vocabulary, of idiomatic expressions, of the cultural content of reading texts, which enable us to consider critically the present modern language course and to plan more intelligently the course of the future. We have ascertained a good many facts about the training and equipment of teachers, how the time is spent in most classrooms, and in what activities teachers and pupils engage, and are in a better position to pass a critical judgment on current practices. While no one is yet ready to propose standards in the only terms in which they can be proposed at all concretely, that is in terms of attainment as measured by a specific and trustworthy scale or series of scales, we are now equipped to begin to establish standards experimentally and to eliminate some of the extraordinary variations in achievement between different schools and between classes in the same school which make of most of our present classes mere chance groups of individuals rather than classes which depart from a given point and travel toward a common goal. Lastly, the published results of this investigation will provide for modern language teachers numerous lessons in approaching educational problems in a systematic manner and in applying scientific methods wherever this is possible.

The most difficult tasks, however, still lie ahead. We do not yet know how to select the pupils who will succeed as measured in terms of knowledge of the subject, nor can we with complete confidence select those to whom modern language study will be socially profitable. It still remains to find out whether the opportunity for an earlier beginning and a longer period of study made possible by the spread of the junior high school can be and should be utilized more effectively than is now the case. We have yet to ascertain whether it is practicable to isolate the factor of method for experimental purposes and really to test the relative effectiveness of two or more classroom techniques. The contribution made by oral practice to the acquisition of a reading knowledge of a foreign language is still imperfectly known. Despite the valuable data now available, we still do not know just what course-content and method will best contribute to the acquisition of the effective and durable reading ability which is universally accepted as the fundamental objective for all students.

These are some of the basic problems that remain to be studied experimentally. Other questions will occur to those who have given consideration to the list of problems formulated by the Study in the early years of its existence; still others, bearing on reading lists, on the preparation of textbooks and on the needs of particular student communities, will occur to all experienced teachers, while additional problems have undoubtedly escaped the analysis of the committee and will be proposed to future workers by experts in the field of education.

Some of our fellow teachers who read the volumes by Wood¹ and by Henmon² and the material presented in the following pages may conclude, somewhat hastily, that the net proceeds from instruction in our subject are so unsatisfactory as to produce in modern language teachers a feeling of discouragement and to provide additional arguments to those who question strongly the wisdom of making liberal provision for teaching modern languages in public secondary schools. If it were established that results of modern language teaching in terms of knowledge of the languages are distinctly inferior to the results obtained in other subjects in terms of knowledge of those subjects, these apprehensions would be well founded. At present, however, no such assertion can be made, for in no other subject at the secondary level has a comparable body of data been assembled, critically studied and made accessible to the public. Some such attempt to take an inventory of the teaching of all subjects will ultimately be made, and the results will undoubtedly be analyzed fearlessly and made public in the interest of teachers, of students and of education in general. All the stray bits of evidence that are accessible indicate that the immediate product of the modern language classroom is in no respect inferior to the results in other fields. Whether this product is as important as others in training young people for the "good life" is quite another matter, about which one might engage in lengthy argument with no definite conclusion in sight.

The first consideration in any field is, undoubtedly, the extent to which the objectives, the subject matter, the classroom method and the teachers' efforts bear fruit in an intelligent and usable knowledge of the subject taught. Closely connected with this intensely practical question is another: To what modifications in objectives, in course-content, in method and in the grouping of students does the available evidence point? To these questions the Committee has found a partial answer, and attempts to embody them in the following pages, which represent an endeavor to bring together from all the other reports and special studies whatever is pertinent and to interpret this material in its bearing on the various problems which confront modern language teachers. The usefulness of this answer to the profession will depend largely on the care with which the reports of the Study are critically examined by our colleagues and on the extent to which the real values they may prove to contain are utilized. It is to be hoped that what has been done will be continued and supplemented by members of our own guild and that workers in other fields will profit by what has been accomplished to produce something superior and more conclusive.

¹ B. D. Wood, *New York Experiments with New-Type Modern Language Tests*. "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," The Macmillan Co., Vol. I (1927).

² V. A. C. Henmon, *Achievement Tests in the Modern Foreign Languages*. "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," The Macmillan Co., Vol. V (1929). A

I

THE OBJECTIVES OF MODERN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

AN EXPERIMENTAL LIST OF OBJECTIVES

Previous discussions. — When the Committee of Twelve formulated its report in 1898 writers on educational subjects were less insistently reminded than they are today of the necessity of proposing in definite form the aims or the objectives¹ of a given subject of instruction, indeed of each phase of each subject of instruction. Those who formulated that report, however, being reasonable persons, were quite aware of the close connection between purpose, values, content and method in teaching any subject and took this into account, although they nowhere formally enumerated "objectives" or "values." In their judgment the primary or "immediate" objective was reading ability. Speaking ability they put expressly in the background (pp. 12-14, 28).² As the result of the training in grammar, in translation, and in composition necessary to attain the immediate objective, they believed that the pupil arrived at one of the two principal "ultimate" objectives: "The general disciplinary value of linguistic and literary study . . . well understood the world over and long recognized in the educational arrangements of every civilized nation." When he had attained reading ability, the student of French or of German — for those two languages occupied the foreground in the mandate of the Committee — was ripe for the second ultimate aim: "Partaking through literature in the intellectual life of other times and other peoples." Practice in speaking, in understanding, in writing was regarded by the Committee as being ancillary to the attainment of the desired goals, and any considerable degree of ability to speak and to write would, the report implies, be reached only by students continuing the subject for at least four years.

Since 1898 there have been numerous statements of what are or what should be the aims of modern language teaching, statements by individuals and by committees, by laymen, by educationists and by groups of modern language teachers intrusted with the task of formulating courses of study. One of the most authoritative from the point of view of the profession is

¹ The term has been defined as representing "a specific, usable skill, knowledge or attitude which should be developed as the result of formal training. It is what the pupil should be able to do, to know, or to be as the result of a given amount of learning." H. Harap, *School and Society*, XXV (1927), 210.

² *Report of the Committee of Twelve of the Modern Language Association of America.* D. C. Heath & Co., no date. vi + 101 pages.

that made in 1914 by the Committee on Modern Languages of the National Education Association,¹ which enumerates explicitly four aims as reconciling the interests of all students whether they pursue the subject for a short time or for a longer period: a good pronunciation; precision in the use of words; a clear understanding of grammatical relations and of the terminology used to express them; stimulation of interest in the foreign nation. To these objectives formally stated, the Committee annexes later: "The most moderate achievement . . . must include at least the power to read an ordinary book rapidly, intelligently, and without too frequent recourse to the dictionary. Attainment short of this is practically useless, and the pupil who is not to reach this stage had better drop his French or German at the end of the first year. In a well-rounded course, satisfactory achievement should include also the ability to express simple thought orally or in writing."

A full exposition of the different statements of objectives would be out of place here. The discussions by Franklin Bobbitt,² Alexander Inglis,³ and David Snedden⁴ may be regarded as representative of the efforts of specialists outside the profession to view the modern language problem in its relation to the secondary curriculum. Professor Bobbitt, somewhat tentatively, presents for consideration the following list (*op. cit.*, p. 265):

1. Ability to use the oral forms of one or more foreign languages in a simple way without any great degree of fluency or correctness.

2. Ability to read one or more foreign languages with moderate ease and fluency and with enjoyment.

3. An improved understanding of and a sympathetic attitude toward the people whose language is studied.

4. Some reduction in degree of provinciality; some increase of cosmopolitan spirit and attitude.

5. A certain degree of furtherance of language abilities in general, including that of the mother tongue, through the extension and diversification of language experience.

A tabulation made in 1926 by Sturgis Leavitt and S. A. Stoudemire of the modern language bulletins issued by 22 states⁵ yields the following list of most frequently occurring items, in the order as given:

1. Ability to read.

2. Ability to write.

3. Ability to speak.

4. Acquaintance with the history, the literature, the people of the foreign country.

5. Ability to understand the foreign language when spoken.

6. Mastery of the grammar of the foreign language.

7. Ability to translate from English into the foreign language.

8. Better understanding and appreciation of the English language.

9. Mental discipline.

¹ *Methods of Teaching Modern Languages*, New Edition, Heath, 1915, pp. 144-169.

² *How to Make a Curriculum*, Houghton, Mifflin, 1924, Chapter XVII.

³ *Principles of Secondary Education*, Houghton, Mifflin, 1918.

⁴ *Sociological Determination of Educational Objectives*, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1921.

⁵ See Appendix 2; "List of Projects."

Neither in this list nor in the Bobbitt list is there any definite classification of the objectives as "immediate" (that is, which must be progressively attained in the classroom as a primary condition of anything further), and "ultimate" (that is, of abilities and attitudes that operate after formal study of the subject has ceased and thus constitute its *raison d'être* educationally)¹. It is clear that such a division, although helpful in clarifying the situation, is not essential, especially when we consider that for the modern languages, at least, reading ability is the one immediate and the one ultimate aim which is found in all lists of objectives.

The social basis for objectives. — An effort to formulate a list of objectives on the basis wholly of experimentally demonstrable validity and order of importance, whether in modern languages or in any other academic subject, would at present almost certainly be unsuccessful. The elaborate analyses from a sociological point of view made by such writers as Bobbitt and Snedden are interesting, ingenious and very useful in making our thinking on educational matters more realistic, but their procedure is, so far, *a priori* and logical rather than experimental. Except in the case of the three R's we can trace the influence of almost no academic subjects on the lives of numerous individuals. While it is true that the huge increase in our secondary school and college clientèle² is one of the forces that has brought about the need for an altered and enlarged and — from an academic viewpoint — somewhat diluted curriculum, it does not yet seem that the commonwealth can afford to dispense with the traditional disciplines or to deny access thereto to those whose interest and capacity point that way. If the classroom accomplishment in any of these branches becomes manifestly low, this constitutes a challenge to our ability to ascertain the cause and the remedy, and not necessarily an argument to reduce the opportunities. It is perfectly apparent that the place of the foreign languages in the curriculum is relatively less prominent today than under former dispensations. This is not because life is essentially much more complex than it was, for life has always been highly complex, but that we have explored more of its material aspects and are hopeful that succeeding generations can exercise a higher degree of control over them than we have done if a different type of training is given, particularly to those individuals to whom the older subjects of instruction have little or no attraction or potential meaning. We must, for example, admit the desirability, even the necessity, of giving larger numbers of persons more vivid acquaintance with the social and political structures in which they

¹ Considerable emphasis is laid on this distinction in the *General Report of the Classical Investigation*, Part I, pp. 32-82. Princeton University Press, 1924.

² "In 1913-14 there were 1,218,804 high school pupils in the United States. In 1925 they numbered 3,650,903, a growth of 200 per cent. During the same period college enrollment increased 168 per cent, from 214,493 to approximately 580,000. There are now in American colleges 770,000 students, of whom about one-third are freshmen." *Sixth Yearbook of Department of Superintendence*, National Education Association, Washington, 1928, p. 140.

are living and with the principles on which civic and social conduct should be founded. The fact that this has been done very imperfectly in the past may be closely connected with the low standards that prevail in the government of many municipalities and larger political units. We may, therefore, hopefully make room for the "social sciences," the logical justification of which is unimpeachable. No one can, of course, confidently predict that such instruction will prove fruitful of good citizenship, nor, if it does, will it be easy to trace the benefits to their source.

Admitting that the sociological analysis of the values of most content subjects is an interesting and desirable speculation (but, so far at least, speculation merely), modern language teachers may take their stand on the verdict of experience and of reason that the intellectual activity involved in learning a foreign language has its worth while educational contribution to make to considerable numbers of persons of high school and college age, and that the abilities developed, the information acquired and the attitudes cultivated may play in the lives of many persons a considerable rôle, economic or recreational or artistic, or all three.

It is only reasonable, however, to take account of the actual activities of American citizens, as the curriculum specialists demand, to enumerate those in which modern language study does or should play a part and to draw therefrom what general conclusions we can as a preliminary to a more detailed examination in the light of available evidence of the various aims that have been proposed. It must be said in advance, that we are at present in a position to do this only to a limited extent. It is only in the last decade that even the elementary school subjects have been scrutinized from this point of view sufficiently to warrant a feeling of confidence in the resultant appraisals that have been made, even for such subjects as arithmetic, spelling and English grammar.¹ No one need feel surprised, therefore, at the sketchiness and, it may be, the conventional nature of the "activity analysis" in modern languages, for little of the necessary groundwork has been done.

The ability to use a modern language or modern languages is or would be of value to a considerable number of persons, to some for vocational or professional purposes, to a greater number because of the larger liberty it gives them for recreation, for self-cultivation and for use in travel. As every traveler knows, and almost every one is a potential traveler, even a reading knowledge and the ability to use and understand a few expressions orally makes a huge difference in the comfort and the profit of a journey, aside from the stimulus of a knowledge of the language to travel and to the establishment of personal contacts with foreigners and, conversely, the effect of travel in increasing language interest. Since

¹ Cf. *Third Yearbook of Department of Superintendence, National Education Association*, "Research in Constructing the Elementary School Curriculum," 1925. Reprint, 1926. Washington, D. C.

from three to four hundred thousand Americans cross the Atlantic eastward every year,¹ it is clear that this consideration is of itself important, particularly in the case of French and of German.

Need of modern languages for foreign commerce.—If, however, we opened modern language classes only to those who will have considerable vocational need therefor, the registration would go down very sharply. No census has been taken of the extent to which foreign languages are used in business at home and abroad by Americans, nor has any estimate been made of the extent to which a foreign language equipment would enable American firms profitably to dispense with foreign clerks as translators of correspondence and as managers in foreign countries.² The fact that numerous translation bureaus largely staffed by foreigners flourish in our large cities is ample evidence of considerable demand for such services.³ There is considerable evidence, for example, that many manufacturers, export houses, banking firms, insurance companies and legal firms have need of foreign languages, especially of Spanish. On the other hand it appears to be true that firms with international connections do not often employ Americans by reason of their having a foreign language equipment, but regard such an ability rather as incidental, though useful. This state of affairs may be due in part to the small residuum of ability to read and to write foreign languages which remains when the need therefor has become pressing, or to the fact that American business in general is strongly inclined to place on correspondents abroad the responsibility of knowing English, or to regard this aspect of the work as purely clerical and worthy to be ranked in dignity and in salary with skill in stenography and in type-writing.⁴ Since American business relations with foreign countries have been, especially since 1914, enormously profitable, such an attitude might appear, to the superficial observer, to be amply justified of its fruits. This state of affairs, however, is manifestly a mark of our provinciality, of our attitude of superiority toward other peoples, due in considerable measure to our consciousness of self-sufficiency in the past and of our material power in the present. While it is true that the people of the United States have no monopoly of arrogance and of condescension toward foreigners, it is none the less true that our present highly favored position among the

¹ See the estimate of 370,000 made by the Department of the Interior, as published in the daily press of Aug. 7, 1927.

² Cf. H. Kurz, "French as a Business Proposition for American Students," *School Review*, XXXI, 662.

³ The Classified Telephone Directory of the City of New York lists 72 such enterprises; that of Chicago lists 20. The data gathered by the Study and published in *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages in the Secondary Schools and Colleges of the United States* (C. A. Wheeler and others, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committee," The Macmillan Co., Vol. IV, 1928) bring out clearly that contacts with Spanish speaking people in the Southwest and Far West run up the enrollment in Spanish very sharply—in some cases to 60 per cent of the school population. While this interest is in part racial and sentimental, the vocational factor is no doubt present too.

⁴ The British Committee on Modern Languages found this attitude very marked among English business men. *Modern Studies*, London, 1918, pp. 25-30.

nations of the world makes it all the more essential for us, as individuals and as a nation, to take a broader view of relationships with other peoples than in the past, if only in the interests of enlightened selfishness, so that our influence, which, for good and for evil, is enormous, whether we realize it or not, may, both materially and intellectually, tend to give reality to the ideals that we proclaim rather than to the jungle policies into which most powerful governments have translated the desires of their nationals for gain and their fears of the greed of others.

Such considerations may not induce banking houses and manufacturers immediately to view with greater respect the modern language side of their business, but if modern language knowledge does or can be made to aid in decreasing the provincialism of a considerable number of individuals, the outcome may be placed among the social values.

Among those groups for whom one or more modern languages have actual or potential utility, we may enumerate the business or professional man with actual or possible foreign connections, the government employee or official with diplomatic or information-gathering duties at home or abroad,¹ the physician and the surgeon trained to keep abreast of progress in other countries, the professorial and the independent investigator in all fields in which experts from other lands make considerable contributions, the engineer, the musician, the artist, the architect, the journalist, the writer and the traveler. The fact that only some individuals in some of these groups make definite use of modern language knowledge does not prove the uselessness of such a tool, but rather that only a few are awake to its value, or that the results of school and college training in this direction do not qualify many persons to consider it as a tool, to be used as normally as the ability to consult a work of reference.

Reading of modern languages by school and college graduates. — The O'Shea inquiry concerning the reading of modern languages after graduation² provides about as trustworthy evidence on this score as could be got by the questionnaire method. Replies were received from about 6400 persons who had studied a modern language for at least two years in secondary school or in college or in secondary school and in college, chosen at random from the classes of 1903, 1908, 1913, 1918. Information was thus furnished by the graduates of high schools in 33 states and by alumni of some 83 colleges. At least 86 per cent of former French students testified that they considered their time in modern language study as having been well spent. The percentages were somewhat smaller in German and in Spanish. In all three languages the testimony points to the con-

¹ "On June 30, 1927, there were 609 persons employed in the Department and 3750 persons in the field service and abroad. Of this number approximately 35 per cent of the domestic employees and 100 per cent of the personnel of the foreign service find it desirable or necessary to have a knowledge of foreign languages." Extract from a letter from the Department of State.

² M. V. O'Shea, *The Reading of Modern Languages*, Bureau of Education Bulletin, 1927, No. 16, 98 pages

clusion that the number of former students of modern languages who consider that their time was well invested is in direct proportion to the length of the period of study (p. 13). Of those who had studied French in high school only, 30 per cent of the two-year group, 40 per cent of the three-year group and 63 per cent of the four-year group had read new material since graduation. Fewer of the German and the Spanish groups had read anything in the foreign language. Those who had studied their foreign language in college only had done relatively more reading since graduation. Professor O'Shea endeavored also to ascertain to what extent former students of modern languages have felt the need of them in after life, and concludes as follows:

" . . . a large percentage of our correspondents has felt a need for foreign language for purposes of correspondence, of conversation, of travel and of research. Conversational need looms larger than any other . . . ; approximately half of our correspondents in each group . . . say that they have been placed in situations where ability to converse in a foreign language would have been of service. . . . At the same time approximately one-third . . . in each group . . . testify that they have never been placed in any situation in which mastery of a foreign language would have been of service to them. . . . Accepting the testimony of our correspondents at face value, it is apparent that if foreign languages can be acquired so that they can be *used* in every day life, they will be of service to a larger proportion of those who graduate. . . . About one-half of high school and college graduates, as they run, will need foreign language for conversation, and at least a fourth of them will need it for correspondence. Only about one-third . . . will go through life and have no need for . . . foreign languages in any way. It is worthy of special mention that a considerably larger proportion of our correspondents have felt the need of French than of German for conversational and travel purposes. It appears also that these needs are greater for . . . Spanish than for . . . German." (pp. 65-67)

On this last point we must take into account the artificial situation produced by the Great War and its effect in turning people away from German, both for study and for travel, during at least one-half of the fifteen year period over which the data are distributed.

Value of modern languages to engineers. — Data cited by O'Shea¹ from a bulletin issued by the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education (1926) indicate that 32 per cent of the electrical and mechanical engineers consulted — about 600 altogether — used their modern languages "much" or "moderately," while the others had found little or no occasion to use them professionally. About 38 per cent testified that modern languages as usually taught to engineering students are justified by their cultural value in proportion to the time expended. In schools of engineering 73 per cent of the 534 teachers who replied to a questionnaire thought that the place of modern languages as now taught is not justified in the curriculum on the basis of their cultural values, but about the same percentage expressed the opinion that a shift could be made in teaching methods that

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

would make the subject worth while for its cultural contribution. About two-thirds of the members of engineering societies who were asked to vote on the cultural values of modern languages and their place in the curriculum expressed the view that their place in the curriculum is not justified by the cultural values of the subject as now taught. A questionnaire to electrical engineering graduates was answered by 884 persons, of whom 261 regarded modern languages as unessential in the course.

In the face of such expressions of opinion one must conclude that the modern language course in engineering schools today falls far short of making a contribution of recognized value and that a reorganization is called for. Unfortunately the data referred to do not offer enough specific criticisms to enable us to determine the direction that the changes should take, but it should not be too difficult for modern language instructors in specific institutions to take stock of the language equipment of most of their engineering graduates in one or more classes, and to predicate their reforms on the facts in the case. One might hazard the guess that if engineering students found themselves able at the time of graduation really to read books in the foreign language, to pronounce the language with some confidence and accuracy and to understand the instructor when reading it aloud or speaking it, they would have much less doubt about its cultural and its practical value. One way to dispose of the problem is to eliminate the subject from the course, but such a procedure provides no answer to the question whether a working knowledge of a modern language is profitable to an engineer practically and culturally, nor does it disclose whether modern language instructors have the originality and the imagination necessary for finding a better way of teaching their subject to future engineers.

Value of modern languages for journalists. — A questionnaire sent out in 1926 by A. L. Stone, Secretary of the Association of American Schools and Departments of Journalism, to graduates in journalism elicited replies from 758 persons.¹ Of these 374 (49 per cent) thought that their course in modern languages had been too brief; 224 (30 per cent) thought that their course had been of the right length; 82 (10.8 per cent) thought that too much time had been devoted to the subject.

One of the questions was: "Have you in connection with your work as journalist felt the need of preparation in any modern foreign language for reading, travel, written communication, oral communication?" The affirmative answers were: Reading, 298 (39 per cent); Travel, 200 (26 per cent); Written Communication, 118 (15 per cent); Oral Communication, 158 (20 per cent).

Another question read: "Has it been possible for you to meet these needs through your preparation?" The answer "yes" came from 148

¹ Unpublished report. MS. in the files of the Study.

persons (19 per cent); the answer "no," from 238 persons (31 per cent). It is of interest to note further that according to 148 of the replies (19 per cent) modern languages should be dropped from the curriculum of schools of journalism, whereas 128 of those who testified (17 per cent) considered the subject a highly beneficial one.

One may safely conclude on the basis of this testimony that there are strong arguments in favor of more and better teaching of modern languages in departments of journalism.¹

In general the results of these studies are favorable and are encouraging to those who maintain that modern language instruction in school and in college is justifiable on the basis of its social values. Such an inquiry as that made by O'Shea could, in the nature of the case, take into account only the "tool" values and could contribute to the answer to only one question: To what extent is a knowledge of modern languages utilized under American conditions? It could not hope to measure the effect of a knowledge of modern languages upon the attitudes of individuals and groups or in the enrichment of culture. It does, however, give reasons for maintaining that the languages may be made even more valuable socially in proportion as they are more effectively taught and better learned.

Tentative list of objectives. — The Committee on Investigation, realizing the hopelessness of arriving immediately at an enumeration of aims on the basis of material evidence alone,² thought it best to assemble from various sources a list of objectives, taking what reason and experience and precedent provided to this end. The members of the Committee subjected the resulting list to careful examination and discussion and issued it in printed form soon thereafter to invite further comment and analysis. The list thus issued was not necessarily indorsed by the Committee further than to say that it represented in an inclusive fashion all the aims, direct and indirect, that have seriously been put forward by responsible persons or groups of persons interested in teaching modern languages.

The list of aims as originally enumerated is as follows:

¹ The following citation is pertinent in this connection: "Among all the fifty featured reporters and correspondents sent by the North American press to Havana . . . I have seen only one . . . conversing in Spanish or following the discussions in Spanish at the meetings of the Pan-American Conference . . . the speeches in Spanish are not translated; it is sometimes days before even a Spanish text of an important speech is available; and translations are likely to be a week late. In such circumstances reporters who do not know Spanish are lost. . . . Before the next Pan-American conference we should take a course at the Berlitz School of Languages." Lewis S. Gannett in the *Nation*, Feb. 15, 1928.

² See the type of inquiry suggested by Handschin, *Methods of Teaching Modern Languages*. World Book Company, 1923, pp. 3-19.

Compare the report by Emma Reinhardt in the *North Central Association Quarterly*, II (1927), pp. 332-338, and the list of 18 objectives accepted as valid by the majority of the 99 teachers and principals consulted. It is interesting to remark that only one objective for the two year course in French was accepted unanimously: "ability to pronounce French with a fair degree of accuracy," despite the fact that ability (a) to read simple French without translation, (b) to write simple French, (c) to speak and understand simple French, etc., appeared in the list.

Immediate Objectives

Progressive development

- A. Of the power to read the foreign language.
- B. Of the power to understand the foreign language when spoken.
- C. Of the power to speak the language.
- D. Of the power to write the language.

Ultimate Objectives

- A. Ability to read the foreign language with ease and enjoyment.
- B. Ability to communicate orally with natives of the country whose language has been studied.
- C. Ability to communicate in writing with natives of the country whose language has been studied.
- D. Increased ability to pronounce and understand foreign words and phrases occurring in English.
- E. Increased ability in the accurate and intelligent use of English.
- F. Increased power to learn other languages.
- G. A more effective realization of the importance of habits of correct articulation and clear enunciation.
- H. Increased knowledge of the history and institutions of the foreign country and a better understanding of its contribution to modern civilization.
- I. Increased ability to understand ideals, standards, and traditions of foreign peoples and Americans of foreign birth.
- J. Development of literary and artistic appreciation.
- K. Development of a more adequate realization of the relation of the individual to society.
- L. A clearer understanding of the history and nature of language.
- M. Increased ability to discern relationships and make comparisons between subjects allied in form and content.
- N. Development of habits of sustained effort.
- O. The ability to make prompt and effective use of foreign discoveries and inventions.
- P. Development of social adaptability through increased personal contacts with natives of other countries.

Analysis of certain objectives. — It will be noted that the attainment of ultimate objectives A, B, and C involves the attainment of the four immediate or instrumental aims: progressive development of the power to read, to understand aurally, to speak, and to write the foreign language. Objectives D, G, H, L, and O, if attained, proceed directly from, and are immediately conditioned by, the content of the modern language course, the way in which it is conducted, and the extent to which the immediate aims are achieved. Objectives E, I, J, K, M, and N, if attained, involve, in varying degrees, the generalization of attitudes and habits that result from the study of modern languages. Objective E belongs to both the second and the third of these groupings, for a better control over English may be developed, on the one hand, by a wider knowledge of word history

and of etymology and by the practice of discrimination in rendering from one language into another, whereas, on the other, it may be conceived as favored by the general growth of language sense that should result from the study of a foreign tongue. Objective P implies that those who have learned modern languages are more apt than others to establish personal contacts with foreigners and to adapt themselves to the ways of those who have a quite different social background. Thus this objective corresponds rather closely to the implications contained in Objective I.

We may say frankly in advance that we know of no way of submitting Objectives G, I, J, K, M, N, and P to any other test for validity and for degree of attainment than that of the opinion of competent persons. Experimental evidence on this question, in so far as there is any, provides no basis for positive assertion that the study of modern languages yields relatively higher dividends in social values of this character than the study of other subjects.¹ However, since modern language study, in the very nature of things, invites attention to the life of nations not our own in a way that few other subjects do, the presumption clearly is that attitudes and interests of a certain kind are more favored by work in this field than in most others. The Committee, in the absence of definite evidence, makes no claims that the contribution of modern language study toward the attainment of these objectives is superior to the contribution of other subjects, except in cases where the very nature of the subject matter, the character of the classroom work, and the training of the teacher — as in the case of Objectives G, I, J, and P — are such as to warrant a definite presumption in favor of the subject as an agency to this end.

On the other hand, there is unfortunately considerable evidence that modern language students may successfully escape attaining any or all of the objectives listed above, even of the objectives with which daily classroom activities are most concerned. Where this occurs we may be sure that attainment of any of the more remote values may be left out of consideration. On the contrary, when course-content, method, the equipment and teaching power of the instructor, and the quality of the work done by pupils are such as to favor the achievement of the aims listed under Objectives A, B, C, D, G, H, L, and O, we do not need to take much thought about the rest, and may feel that we are engaged in a useful educational enterprise even if the degree of attainment of the objectives listed is much smaller than some foreign language partisans have assumed it to be.²

¹ E. L. Thorndike, "Mental Discipline in High School Studies," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, January-February, 1924, pp. 1-22, 83-98.

² We may introduce in this connection a pertinent citation from Professor W. C. Bagley: "In my opinion the possibilities of transfer are increased by the kind of teaching that makes the student conscious of the procedure as such, and keenly appreciative of its value as a general procedure. The theory of 'identical elements' I regard as sound, but it is not rich in pedagogical suggestiveness. The theory of transfer through 'concepts of method' and 'ideals of procedure' furnishes a definite suggestion for teaching—a person who has gained an understanding and an *appreciation* of a procedure will not be limited to the

EVIDENCE ON VALIDITY AND DEGREE OF ATTAINMENT

The next step was to submit this tentative list to a considerable number of professionally minded teachers in order to test the validity of the various items and the degree of attainment in so far as the reasoned opinion of members of the profession may, in default of other standards, constitute a criterion. In the spring of 1926 an extensive questionnaire, known as the "Selected Teachers' Questionnaire," was sent out to 1650 teachers who had been chosen after a wide canvass as being particularly fitted to represent the profession. Of these usable returns were received as follows: High School French, 285; High School Spanish, 205; High School German, 44; Private School French, 38; Private School Spanish, 5; Private School German, 3; College French, 102; College German, 46; College Spanish, 87. Thus the Committee canvassed the opinions of 580 selected secondary teachers, and of 235 from the colleges, on the validity and the degree of attainment of the objectives commonly proposed, as well as on many other points, as will appear in the course of this discussion. The group of four "immediate" aims was not included in the questionnaire; the longer list of "ultimate" aims was reproduced as it appears above.

Our task now is to examine the various objectives in the light of such evidence as is available in regard to validity and degree of attainment, in the belief that only thus can we add anything fresh to questions that have been argued back and forth, time and again. This evidence consists chiefly of returns from the questionnaire described above, of data gathered from the extensive testing campaign carried on by the Study in 1926-27 and from the New York experiment with new-type tests, from special inquiries in various fields,¹ from the material gathered by the Classical Committee, and from other similar sources.

If readers of this discussion keep in mind the various factors that complicate an examination of the modern language course — variations in the age of beginning, in the type of institution in which the elementary period is spent, in the theoretical and the actual length of the course, with only a relatively small probability of as much as three years, they will read the following pages with a fuller understanding. They will do this even if

'identical elements' which come by accident; he will search for identities—for places at which the procedure may be applied." *Reorganization of Secondary Mathematics*, p. 97.

The following sentences from C. H. Judd are also representative of contemporary opinion among psychologists: "There is no guaranty in its content that any subject will give general training to the mind. The type of training which pupils receive is determined by the method of presentation and by the degree to which self-activity is induced rather than by content. It is not far from the truth to assert that any subject taught with a view to training pupils in methods of generalization is highly useful as a source of mental training and that any subject which emphasizes particular items of knowledge and does not stimulate generalization is educationally barren." *Psychology of Secondary Education*, pp. 432-433.

It is probable that even those members of the profession who do not wholly accept such a view of the relative potential values of the various content subjects are willing to draw from these quotations the practical inferences that bear on the organization and conduct of the modern language course.

¹ Cf. Appendix 2, "List of Projects," at end of this volume.

they leave out of account other considerations, such as the influence of college entrance requirements, the well known variations in school standards, in teacher personality and equipment, and in the capacities, tastes and background of students.

Length of the period of study in secondary schools. — Before embarking on this part of our task, it is necessary to mention several factors that complicate the situation. There is no course of standard length and no standard of age or of school level for beginning modern language study. Comparatively small numbers begin in junior high school; beginners in considerable numbers are found in every high school year, and, particularly west of the Alleghenies, in the first and second years in college. The following tables show just what the enrollment situation is as revealed by positive information from about 83 per cent of the nearly 22,000 public secondary schools of the country with about 90 per cent of the school population and about 83 per cent of the total enrollment in modern languages. The data cover a school enrollment of about 3,000,000 pupils.¹

TABLE 1²

ENROLLMENT IN FRENCH, GERMAN, SPANISH AND LATIN IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS, IN SPRING OF 1925, DISTRIBUTED AS IT OCCURRED IN THE SEVERAL YEARS OF STUDY AND THE SEVERAL GRADES.³

Total number of schools	10,887
Total enrollment	2,635,747

French⁴

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
1st . .	7,421	18,469	57,832	61,599	48,506	5,748	199,575
2nd . .	1,010	419	4,962	36,484	40,511	34,218	117,634
3rd . .	...	...	295	2,146	15,243	19,037	36,721
4th . .	...	...	8	95	796	4,390	5,289
Total French enrollment .	8,431	18,888	63,127	100,324	105,056	63,393	359,219
Total enrollment	137,930	137,735	585,884	465,954	343,259	274,087	1,944,849

¹The data on enrollment are drawn from Wheeler, *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages*, *op. cit.*, *passim* and represent the situation as it was in 1925.

²From Table IV in Part I of Wheeler, *Enrollment in Foreign Languages in the Secondary Schools and Colleges of the United States*.

³The total number of pupils enrolled in Italian in schools reporting was 2831.

⁴From Table IV-A in Part I of Wheeler, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-2.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

German

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
1st . .	84	321	8,055	6,655	3,873	1,032	20,020
2nd . .	...	...	186	3,626	3,905	2,565	10,282
3rd . .	...	...	15	100	1,171	1,095	2,381
4th . .	...	...	...	12	32	143	187
Total German enrollment .	84	321	8,261	10,393	8,981	4,835	32,870
Total enrollment	13,584	14,367	165,948	152,459	106,972	83,009	536,339

Spanish

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
1st . .	3,352	10,524	62,946	40,298	28,302	5,522	150,944
2nd . .	38	212	3,482	34,742	23,926	19,106	81,506
3rd . .	...	...	125	1,069	10,324	6,332	17,850
4th . .	...	...	15	54	320	2,708	3,097
Total Spanish enrollment .	3,390	10,736	66,568	76,163	62,872	33,668	253,397
Total enrollment	87,888	88,892	426,542	363,414	261,515	207,775	1,436,026

COMBINED ENROLLMENT IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH BY YEARS OF STUDY AND BY GRADES.

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
1st . .	10,857	29,314	128,833	108,552	80,681	12,302	370,539
2nd . .	1,048	631	8,660	74,852	68,342	55,889	209,422
3rd . .	...	...	435	3,315	26,738	26,464	56,952
4th . .	...	...	23	161	1,148	7,241	8,573
Grand total	11,905	29,945	137,951	186,880	176,909	101,896	645,486

TABLE 1 (Continued)

TOTAL ENROLLMENT FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH BY YEARS OF STUDY.

YEAR	FRENCH	GERMAN	SPANISH	TOTAL
1st	199,575	20,020	150,944	370,539
2nd	117,634	10,282	81,506	209,422
3rd	36,721	2,381	17,850	56,952
4th	5,289	187	3,097	8,573
Grand total	359,219	32,870	253,397	645,486

Latin

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
1st	16,437	20,675	230,390	45,596	16,518	3,202	332,818
2nd	1,495	10,438	6,987	139,486	27,564	11,262	197,232
3rd	145	501	6,886	4,444	38,749	5,319	56,044
4th	...	7	103	3,283	1,084	21,109	25,586
Total Latin enrollment	18,077	31,621	244,366	192,809	83,915	40,892	611,680
Total enrollment	204,836	204,881	734,775	560,898	402,444	322,836	2,430,670

TABLE 2¹

ENROLLMENT IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS, IN SPRING OF 1925, DISTRIBUTED AS IT OCCURRED IN THE SEVERAL YEARS OF STUDY AND THE SEVERAL GRADES.

Regular High Schools

Total number of schools	1,033
Total enrollment	109,707

French

Number of schools	624
Total enrollment	79,504

YEAR	9	10	11	12	TOTAL BY YEARS
1st	3,102	5,480	3,866	537	12,985
2nd	52	2,370	4,187	2,927	9,536
3rd . . . . .	....	33	1,557	2,264	3,854
4th . . . . .	....	....	37	779	816
Total French enrollment by grades	3,154	7,883	9,647	6,507	27,191

¹ From Table IV in Part I of Wheeler, *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages*, pp. 372-377.

TABLE 2 (Continued)

German

Number of schools 143
 Total enrollment 24,426

YEAR	9	10	11	12	TOTAL BY YEARS
1st	918	327	551	133	1,929
2nd	5	691	256	403	1,355
3rd . . . . .	....	....	411	73	484
4th . . . . .	....	....	8	273	281
Total German enrollment by grades	923	1,018	1,226	882	4,049

Spanish

Number of schools 396
 Total enrollment 55,705

YEAR	9	10	11	12	TOTAL BY YEARS
1st	2,108	2,228	2,347	398	7,081
2nd	3	1,385	1,436	1,727	4,551
3rd . . . . .	....	13	392	715	1,120
4th . . . . .	....	....	....	190	190
Total Spanish enrollment by grades	2,111	3,626	4,175	3,030	12,942

COMBINED ENROLLMENT IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH BY YEARS OF STUDY
 AND BY GRADES — REGULAR HIGH SCHOOLS, PRIVATE.

YEAR	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
1st	6,128	8,035	6,764	1,068	21,995
2nd	60	4,446	5,879	5,057	15,442
3rd . . . . .	....	46	2,360	3,052	5,458
4th . . . . .	....	....	45	1,242	1,287
Grand total ¹	6,188	12,527	15,048	10,419	44,182

¹ Total Italian enrollment, 55.

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Other Than Regular High Schools

Total number of schools 308

Total enrollment 32,841

French

Number of schools 299

Total enrollment 32,002

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL BY YEARS
1st	2,391	3,026	4,026	988	395	94	10,920
2nd . . . . .	....	609	441	2,481	815	762	5,108
3rd . . . . .	....	....	3	277	2,868	768	3,916
4th . . . . .	....	....	1	8	201	1,905	2,115
5th . . . . .	....	....	....	....	....	48	48
Total French enrollment by grades	2,391	3,635	4,471	3,754	4,279	3,577	22,107

German

Number of schools 77

Total enrollment 11,610

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL BY YEARS
1st	39	34	148	158	105	46	530
2nd	..	..	4	104	141	143	392
3rd	..	..	..	1	96	76	173
4th	..	..	..	..	..	51	51
Total German enrollment by grades	39	34	152	263	342	316	1146

Spanish¹

Number of schools 130

Total enrollment 15,712

YEAR	9	10	11	12	TOTAL BY YEARS
1st	249	423	442	134	1,248
2nd	6	193	306	311	816
3rd . . . . .	....	6	91	161	258
4th . . . . .	....	....	1	15	16
Total Spanish enrollment by grades	255	622	840	621	2,338

¹ No Spanish enrollment reported for Grades 7 and 8.

TABLE 2 (Continued)

COMBINED ENROLLMENT IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH BY YEARS OF STUDY AND BY GRADES — OTHER THAN REGULAR HIGH SCHOOLS.

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL BY YEARS
1st	2,430	3,060	4,423	1,569	942	274	12,698
2nd . . . . .	....	609	451	2,778	1,262	1,216	6,316
3rd . . . . .	....	....	3	284	3,055	1,005	4,347
4th . . . . .	....	....	1	8	202	1,971	2,182
5th . . . . .	....	....	....	....	....	48	48
Grand total ¹ .	2,430	3,669	4,878	4,639	5,461	4,514	25,591

COMBINED ENROLLMENT IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH BY YEARS OF STUDY AND BY GRADES — ALL PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

YEAR	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL BY YEARS
1st	2,430	3,060	10,551	9,604	7,706	1,342	34,693
2nd . . . . .	....	609	511	7,224	7,141	6,273	21,758
3rd . . . . .	....	....	3	330	5,415	4,057	9,805
4th . . . . .	....	....	1	8	247	3,213	3,469
5th . . . . .	....	....	....	....	....	48	48
Grand total ² .	2,430	3,669	11,066	17,166	20,509	14,933	69,773

NATIONAL SUMMARY FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS

1. Total enrollment in 1341 private schools with modern languages 142,548
2. Total enrollment in all modern foreign languages . . . 71,305 ³
3. Total enrollment in 1280 private schools with Latin . . 138,449
4. Total enrollment in Latin 80,800
5. Modern language per cent of total in 1341 schools . . 50
6. Latin per cent of total in 1280 private schools . . . 58.4

¹ Total Italian enrollment, 81.

² Total Italian enrollment, 136.

³ Includes private school enrollment in Italian, Swedish, Norse, Bohemian, Polish, Russian; cf. Wheeler and others, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-8; 378.

TABLE 3¹

ENROLLMENT IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SPRING OF 1925, DISTRIBUTED BY YEARS OF STUDY.

Number of schools 12,228
Total enrollment 2,778,295

YEAR	MODERN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT	PERCENTAGE OF MODERN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT OF PRECEDING YEAR OR YEARS
1st	405,232	57 per cent of first year enrollment 16.5 per cent of first year enrollment 28.8 per cent of second year enrollment 2.9 per cent of first year enrollment 18 per cent of third year enrollment
2nd	231,180	
3rd	66,757	
4th	12,042	
Grand total	715,211	

PERCENTAGES WHICH THE COMBINED ENROLLMENT IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH IN THE FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH YEARS OF STUDY OF THESE LANGUAGES FORMED OF THE TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE SPRING OF 1925.

YEAR	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN MODERN LANGUAGES
1st	56.6
2nd	31.8
3rd	9.7
4th	1.7

Period of beginning study of foreign languages. — It will be observed (Table 1) that whereas somewhat the largest number of beginners in high school French are in the tenth grade or sophomore year and could therefore continue the subject for three years, in German and in Spanish the largest numbers of first year students are found in the 9th grade. The great flood of Latin beginners is also found in the 9th grade (Table 1). However, the table (Table 1) showing the total modern foreign language enrollment in public secondary schools by grades and by years brings out the noteworthy fact that the proportions of beginners in the ninth, tenth, and

¹The following estimate of the combined enrollment in the foreign languages in the secondary schools in the United States in the spring of 1925 is a combination of the estimated figures for all public secondary schools (Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p. 11) and the enrollment reported from 54 per cent of the private schools (*ibid.*, p. 16):

FRENCH	GERMAN	SPANISH	TOTAL	LATIN
490,376	39,865	319,873	850,114	874,885

eleventh grades are about 35 per cent, 30 per cent and 22 per cent respectively of the total first year enrollment in modern languages. In private schools (Table 2) the beginners are distributed about as follows: 30 per cent in ninth grade, 28 per cent in tenth grade and 22 per cent in eleventh grade. It thus appears that the number of beginners in modern languages was fairly evenly distributed between the ninth, tenth and eleventh grades in the public and private secondary schools of the country in 1925, a fact which is of obvious significance both for the age at beginning and for the length of time during which it is possible to continue the subject at the secondary level.

The replies of teachers to the Selected Teachers' Questionnaire indicate that of the high schools represented about 40 per cent have a three-year course and about 33 per cent have a four-year course in modern languages (280 French reports: 72, two years, 114, three years, 88, four years; 198 Spanish reports: 42, two years, 71, three years, 75, four years; 43 German reports: 6, two years, 23, three years, 10, four years), beginning about equally in the ninth and in the tenth years.¹

Discontinuance of modern language study after second year. — It is also clear that for about 83 per cent of those who begin modern language in the public and private secondary schools for which we have data, two years is the maximum period for the study of the subject (Table 3), while only about 57 per cent of those who begin continue even through a second year. The third year registration for French, German and Spanish in public schools in 1925 was less than 16 per cent of the first year enrollment in modern languages (Table 1) and the fourth year slightly over 2 per cent of the first. Of the total modern language enrollment, approximately 57 per cent was in the first year, 32 per cent in the second, 10 per cent in the third, 1.7 per cent in the fourth (Table 3),² whereas the usual distribution of the total population in regular high schools is said to be approximately as follows: 40 per cent in the first year, 25 per cent in the second year, 18–20 per cent in the third year, 12–15 per cent in the fourth year.³ The proportions vary among the different languages, with French making the best comparative showing in continuity, somewhat better than Latin — almost 20 per cent for the third year as against slightly less than 17 per cent for

¹ From the Gosling report (see p. 34 below) it would appear that more beginners in foreign languages are found in the ninth grade of the junior high in the North Central area than in the lower grades, which would indicate for this region rather an adherence to the high school tradition of beginning a foreign language at this point than a tendency really to put the beginning at an early stage, as this type of school makes it possible to do.

² If the enrollment in private secondary schools is taken into account (see Table 3), the proportions are somewhat different in the third and fourth years, but not sufficiently different to change the situation in any essential manner. R. W. Haller, in an article in the *Modern Language Journal* (XI, p. 171), estimates that about 25 per cent of the modern language students in New York city schools follow the subject for more than four semesters.

³ According to the Bureau of Education Bulletin (1925) No. 40, the total high school enrollment in 1923–24 was distributed as follows: 37 per cent in first year; 27 per cent in second year; 20 per cent in third year; 16 per cent in fourth year (Grades 9 to 10).

Latin (Table 1). Some allowance must be made for the total falling off in registration in high schools from year to year regardless of subjects (26 per cent from first year to second year, 27 per cent from second to third, 22 per cent from third to fourth in 1923-24), while a not inconsiderable number of pupils who take only two years of a modern language in high school continue the subject in college both in the area of the College Entrance Examination Board and in colleges that accept freshmen by certificate.¹

It appears, furthermore, that in a good many public secondary schools the organization of the curriculum is such as to make it difficult in many cases for pupils to take a third year of a modern language. The evidence to this effect consists chiefly of statements by individuals, but these are too numerous and too widespread to be ignored. In fact there appears to prevail in public school circles the judgment, implied, if nowhere definitely formulated, that the normal course in a foreign language, ancient or modern, should last only two years if the student's general secondary education is to be provided for properly. This probably represents in part a reaction against the extent to which foreign language study formerly filled up the program, and in part results from more recent tendencies in curriculum revision in behalf of the large groups of young people who formerly did not enter the secondary school. Another important factor is brought out by the enrollment percentages given above, which show that slightly more than one-fifth of the beginners in modern languages in public high schools were in the eleventh grade, and could therefore do at most two years in the subject. In all probability a large number of this group had taken Latin as a first foreign language. It is evident, therefore, that the failure of students to continue in the subject for a third year is due to a variety of circumstances and can not be explained wholly by a lack of interest.

One most unfortunate aspect of this situation is that many students would at present, even under favorable conditions, need longer than two years to reach the point of mastery, even of reading ability. Professor Buswell's findings on this point are of importance.² "The results secured in this investigation indicate that the middle half of a class either in high school or in college does not, in two years' time, reach the level of final maturity in reading. Certain individuals . . . did reach this degree of maturity at the end of two years. . . . However, the reading habits of the groups as a whole fall below those of the expert or mature readers by an amount which probably represents about a year of additional

¹ The "Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the College Entrance Examination Board" gives the following figures on students taking the "elementary" examination in modern languages in 1927: 4893 in French, 815 in German, 44 in Italian, 752 in Spanish. Total 6504. It is worthy of note, however, that of the 9169 freshmen presenting two or more years of modern language for admission to college in 1925, only 3494 continued the subject in college (R. H. Fife in the *German Quarterly*, I, pp. 14-15).

² G. T. Buswell, *A Laboratory Study of the Reading of Modern Foreign Languages*, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," The Macmillan Co., Vol. II, 1927, p. 94.

study. . . ." (Cf. below, Chapter II, pp. 147-151.) Since the subjects used in this investigation were being taught under good conditions, this conclusion in regard to the relation between achievement and time spent is all the more significant and suggests that school authorities should encourage competent students who begin a foreign language to do at least three years, even though, as a corollary, they should further restrict the number of those allowed to enroll.

Consequently, although the yearly reduction of enrollment in modern languages is by no means to be ascribed wholly to the failure of the subject to hold pupils, the fact is indisputable, whatever be the explanation therefor, that the vast majority of those who begin a modern language take it as a two-year subject at most, and have therefore only two years in which to develop the language power and to cultivate the attitudes by which the contribution of the subject to their education will be chiefly determined.¹ This fact is of the greatest import. It can not be said to come entirely as a surprise, even though definite and extensive statistical evidence is now first available as an outcome of the inquiries made by the Study, for it has been for many years a matter of common knowledge and of discussion among teachers that their third year classes were much smaller than their second, and their fourth year an apparently disappearing element.

Schools offering one- and two-year courses in foreign languages. — The number of schools that offer only one-year and two-year courses in modern languages is large, and this too has long been a matter of common knowledge. However, little or no account appears to have been taken of this important factor in the modern language situation, which is fully revealed in its numerical aspects by Tables 4 and 5, on pages 29 and 30.

We note from Tables 4 and 5 that 3075, or about 63 per cent of the 4847 public secondary schools that offer French, have at most two years of instruction in French; that 1621, or about 67 per cent of the 2424 public secondary schools that offer Spanish, have at most two years of instruction in Spanish. The number offering such a restricted course of study in Latin is 1547, or about 16 per cent of the 9889 schools offering that language. It is worthy of mention, however, that relatively more Latin pupils than French pupils discontinue the subject after two years.

Attitude of teachers toward the two-year course. — An examination of large numbers of syllabi and course-outlines for states, systems, and individual schools yields almost no evidence that the second year generally is regarded as a critical period for most pupils, providing, as it actually does, their last opportunity for class instruction and for guidance in the utilization of their modern language knowledge. Teachers appear rather to look upon the first two years as a part of a four-, or at least of a three-

¹ For an extended analysis of the situation, cf. Wheeler, *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages*, pp. 352 ff.

TABLE 4

PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF ALL TYPES OFFERING ONE YEAR OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LATIN WITH TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND ENROLLMENT IN THE SEVERAL FOREIGN LANGUAGES, DISTRIBUTED AS THEY OCCURRED IN THE EIGHT REGIONS, WITH NATIONAL SUMMARIES.

Region	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OFFERING					TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN SCHOOLS OFFERING ONE YEAR					ENROLLMENT BY LANGUAGES						
	French		German	Other	Spanish	Latin	French		German	Other	Spanish	Latin	French	German	Other	Spanish	Latin
New England	47	6	..	13	18	16,136	4,264	...	6,793	512	4,983	140	...	382	144		
Middle Atlantic	115	8	1*	36	43	69,608	3,365	5,549*	46,767	1,663	13,378	248	94*	5,666	595		
South	123	..	..	29	10	10,658	...	...	2,741	168	1,672	...	...	428	90		
North Central	125	17	..	45	64	30,185	10,020	...	17,927	3,424	2,706	369	...	1,184	786		
West Central	39	..	..	67	75	3,893	...	...	6,796	5,201	541	...	...	1,009	890		
Southwest	12	..	..	49	8	9,299	...	...	12,639	505	544	...	...	1,793	81		
Northwest	51	6	7**	35	11	3,783	109	265**	4,347	750	504	48	52***	507	142		
California	37	..	..	49	15	25,469	...	...	35,215	1,470	1,779	...	...	5,864	140		
National Summary	549	37	8	323	244	169,031	17,758	5,814	133,225	13,693	26,107	805	146	16,833	2,868		

* Italian. ** Norse.

TABLE 5

PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF ALL TYPES OFFERING TWO YEARS OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LATIN WITH TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND ENROLLMENT IN THE SEVERAL FOREIGN LANGUAGES, DISTRIBUTED AS THEY OCCURRED IN THE EIGHT REGIONS, WITH NATIONAL SUMMARIES.

Region	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OFFERING					TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN SCHOOLS OFFERING TWO YEAR COURSE					ENROLLMENT BY LANGUAGES				
	French	German	Other	Spanish	Latin	French	German	Other	Spanish	Latin	French	German	Other	Spanish	Latin
New England	109	42	2*	75	55	27,358	38,703	1,590*	35,282	2,769	7,951	1,719	68*	5,276	1,037
Middle Atlantic	514	37	3*	127	343	101,050	30,317	6,553*	56,727	19,947	20,124	2,084	235*	6,309	8,125
South	696	..	..	118	96	115,518	..	..	46,361	5,828	22,214	..	..	7,571	2,590
North Central	771	62	..	141	541	256,461	60,747	..	122,429	53,521	27,611	3,814	..	11,766	15,020
West Central	104	..	..	221	159	27,849	..	..	59,705	14,677	3,212	..	..	9,645	3,468
Southwest	26	..	..	286	71	11,259	..	..	43,065	9,857	611	..	..	11,949	2,010
Northwest	241	7	12**	231	126	49,137	362	1,196**	52,724	16,996	5,536	132	285**	8,002	2,715
California	65	..	..	99	88	34,363	..	..	28,873	22,190	2,386	..	..	5,563	2,151
National Summary	2,526	148	17	1,298	1,303	622,995	130,129	9,339	445,166	145,175	89,645	7,749	588	66,081	37,116

* Italian. ** Norse.

year course, as a period of foundation laying, the benefits of which are to be reaped only if the pupil carries on to the next stage. Not even in the most recent course-outlines resulting from contemporary theories of curriculum construction¹ does a different attitude appear, despite the tribute paid in the statement of objectives to the principle that the work of each year should be "a unit of lasting value." The threefold aim, the preparation for reading, writing, and speaking, runs all the way through, from the first semester in junior high to the last semester in senior high, with no apparent indication that the process, instead of being continuous, may cease abruptly at almost any point. It may be alleged that the Committee of Twelve took this situation partly into account when it outlined the work of the "elementary" course in French and in German, but a moment's reflection makes it evident that the Committee had in mind here only those who were to enter college (see Report, Section VI), and, as it will appear hereafter, held quite different views about the shorter course.

Foreign languages in the junior high school. — The profession usually recognizes in a rough way that there are differences in achievement according to the age of beginning. To this are to be ascribed the fact that two years in junior high school in the seventh and eighth, or even in the eighth and ninth grades are frequently accepted as equal to one in senior high, and that two years in high school are credited usually as equivalent to one in college. Such measurements are, of course, of the roughest kind and may entirely leave out of account the capacity of the individual and the particular character of the teaching he has had. It is true that the more discerning college teachers are watchful to promote or to put back students according to their knowledge of the language, and high school teachers may also take account of excellent or of poor individual cases, but, in the first place, "administrative conditions" may be a barrier to many such adjustments, and, in the second place, in the absence of any even approximately uniform standards by which these cases are to be judged, it would be surprising if readjustments of this nature occurred with any regularity, or if we could count on them to correct the defects of the rule-of-thumb method of granting credits.

Such experimental data as are accessible, while not conclusive, are fruitful of suggestion. A comparison of achievement by means of scores on the American Council French and Spanish tests indicates that the ratio of two semesters for one used in granting college credit for high school work is fairly well borne out by the test scores through the first four high school semesters, but that from the fourth semester on the high school student

¹ Cf. the *Denver Course of Study Monographs* for French and for Spanish, Nos. 15 and 11, 1925, and see the Detroit booklet, *Foreign Languages in Intermediate and Senior High Schools*, Board of Education, City of Detroit, 1926, which announces a two-year course but makes little or no concession to the reduced time allowance except to suggest (p. 19) that five semesters' work can be done in four by more mature pupils and in a second language.

appears to progress with greater comparative speed, in knowledge of grammar at least.¹

On the other hand, the Buswell study (pp. 19-60) presents a good deal of definite evidence to the effect that progress in reading by high school and by college students taught by a "direct reading" method may be alike in kind and not markedly different in degree. When confronted by such testimony of a quite specific nature, we are led immediately to ask whether the apparent failure of college men to perceive this is due to the fact that they test preparation usually by grammatical knowledge rather than by reading ability, or because the conventional two-year high school course does not result in any considerable degree of reading power, particularly in view of the greater maturity and higher selection of college students, or because of the failure to correlate high school and college courses in objectives, in content, and in standards of performance, or because college authorities in general are prone to take things as they are.

Whether all or some of these reasons are effective in helping to explain the situation, it is clear that the whole question is in need of careful investigation, not only to put on a realistic basis the relations between junior high school and high school, between high school and college, but to throw light on the even more important question of the general effect of age of beginning on progress in learning the language.

The enrollment in foreign languages in junior high schools for the country as a whole in 1924-25 is probably reflected quite faithfully in Table 6. The figures were assembled directly from the schedules returned by the schools in response to the questionnaire sent out in the spring of 1925.²

From Tables 6 and 7 we see that the percentage which the number of junior high school pupils studying the modern languages forms of the total enrollment is about the same as the percentage which those studying Latin form.³ Of the 624 junior high schools reporting, 240 with an enrollment of 98,032 offer Latin only, that is, 38 per cent of the junior high schools with 25 per cent of the junior high school enrollment, which indicates that this group is made up of the smaller schools. We may say in general — and this applies to both junior and regular high schools — that in the smaller schools where only one foreign language is taught, Latin is usually the one offered by the school authorities. For example, of the 8924 regular

¹ See Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-210.

² We are informed that in 1925-26 there were 879 junior high schools in the United States with a school population of 383,417. *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence* (cf. pp. 24-29). In November 1927, the officials at the Bureau of Education estimated that 1200 were in existence. The inquiry into enrollment made by the Study during the school year 1924-25 brought replies from 624 junior high schools — about 75 per cent — with a total enrollment of 397,572. As the Study data have been very carefully tabulated and checked, the Committee is inclined to accept this enrollment figure as approximately correct for the 624 schools, and to believe that the total enrollment given in the *Yearbook* referred to is an understatement of the situation as it was even then (cf. *Yearbook*, Note 1, p. 24).

³ The proportion varies greatly in different regions, rising in New England to 56 per cent of the total junior high enrollment. See *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages*, pp. 21 ff.

high schools, with a school population of 1,722,784, offering a foreign language, 3984, having a total enrollment of 273,651 and a Latin enrollment of 103,520, offer Latin only. That is, 45 per cent of the number of regular high schools with 16 per cent of the school population offer only

TABLE 6

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES OFFERING FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN, SPANISH AND LATIN, WITH TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, ENROLLMENT IN THE SEVERAL FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND PERCENTAGES WHICH THE LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT FORMS OF THE TOTAL ENROLLMENT. SPRING SESSION OF 1925.¹

Total number of junior high schools reporting	624
Total enrollment	397,572

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OFFERING		TOTAL ENROLLMENT	FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT	PER CENT OF TOTAL
French	312	256,447	39,497	15
German	18	20,768	754	4
Italian	2	3,779	527	14
Spanish	190	174,503	23,640	14
Latin	540	340,997	50,925	15—

TABLE 7

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES OFFERING THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LATIN, WITH TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND ENROLLMENT IN MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND IN LATIN, WITH PERCENTAGE WHICH THE LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT FORMS OF THE TOTAL ENROLLMENT. ARRANGED ACCORDING TO REGIONS, WITH NATIONAL SUMMARY. SPRING SESSION OF 1925.

REGION	MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES				LATIN			
	Number of Schools	Total Enroll- ment	Modern Foreign Language Enroll- ment	Per cent of Total	Number of Schools	Total Enroll- ment	Latin Enroll- ment	Per cent of Total
New England	118	46,911	14,160	30	96	41,666	7,716	19
Middle At- lantic	125	114,961	24,717	22	99	83,396	12,679	15
South	51	24,460	2,309	9	50	23,465	4,114	18
North Central	157	103,507	5,470	5	152	99,610	15,665	16
West Central	53	27,398	1,181	4	53	27,406	4,071	15
Southwest	45	26,328	4,994	19	34	22,212	2,973	13
Northwest	14	4,171	41	1	12	4,114	538	13
California	61	49,836	11,546	23	44	39,128	3,169	8
National Summary	624	397,572	64,418	16	540	340,997	50,925	15

¹ The figures in Tables 6 and 7 are drawn from Wheeler, *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages*, Table I, pp. 21 ff.

Latin. About 38 per cent of the pupils in these schools take Latin.¹ It is also interesting to observe (Table 7) that there are modern language areas and Latin areas in the junior high school as there are in all types of secondary schools.

Period of beginning as a factor in attainment. — It has been generally assumed that an early beginning is advantageous. It undoubtedly is if fluent speaking and writing are among the objectives and if the period of study will last until these are attained, but if the period of study is to be only two years and if the essential objective is reading ability, it is proper at least to raise the question as to the point at which the subject may best be begun. This is particularly pertinent in view of the evidence adduced in the Buswell study.² Only additional, carefully gathered, experimental data will permit of a categorical reply to this question, a question that is all the more insistent now because of the increase in number of junior high schools with foreign language courses.

A recent inquiry by Gosling³ into the subject of foreign languages in the junior high schools in the North Central area covered 337 schools in twenty states, having a total enrollment in 1925-26 of 167,553. Of the schools canvassed, 280, with a total enrollment of 145,747, returned data for the foreign languages. The total Latin enrollment was 21,888, or slightly over 15 per cent of the total in the schools offering Latin. The total for the modern languages was 8126 (French 4706, Spanish 3321), or below 16 per cent of the total enrollment in the schools offering modern languages.⁴ The foreign language enrollment was chiefly in the ninth grade — just under 20,000 — and the greater part of this was in Latin. Of 227 statements in regard to "values" of beginning a foreign language at the junior high stage made by the principals who filled out the Gosling questionnaire, the first place falls to "aid in the study of English," with 60 votes; second place to "preparation for senior high school," with 43 votes; and in third and fourth places, with 39 and 30 votes respectively, come "value for exploratory purposes" and "child learns more easily."⁵ As neither prognostic nor achievement tests were used these statements represent opinion only.

While these data are merely suggestive to modern language teachers of a constantly increasing problem to the solution of which only hit-or-miss methods have been applied, Buswell presents evidence to the effect that junior high school and elementary school students progress much

¹ Cf. *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages*, Table III.

² See *op. cit.*, p. 60. E. L. Thorndike, etc., *Adult Learning*, Macmillan, 1928, adds force to this suggestion.

³ T. W. Gosling, *North Central Association Quarterly*, June, 1926, pp. 106-138.

⁴ The variance between this enrollment return and that given above (Table 6) is due no doubt to the fact that more junior high schools in the territory covered replied to the Gosling inquiry than to the one initiated by the Study.

⁵ In regard to reasons for inclusion of foreign languages at this stage, 300 replies give "local reasons," 94 report "no reason," while 80 make no reply.

more slowly in reading ability than older ones.¹ While admitting that the relative gain in the several abilities by junior high school students remains to be investigated, one might hazard certain other conjectures. It is almost certain that if the modern language course is not continued beyond the junior high school period, it is productive of little durable language knowledge. Children at this age will profit little by any formal grammar teaching, and should rather devote their efforts to practice in reading and in oral work, coupled with getting acquainted with the foreign country. If the course is to be limited to two years, and is to have no sequel, it should come at a more advanced stage, and its place at lower levels may more profitably be taken by some work in "general language" coupled with an introduction through reading and *realia* to the life and civilization of the other great countries of the world. The members of the Committee are not in possession of sufficient data about the attainment in foreign language work in the junior high school to discuss it in any but the most tentative fashion. As has been shown, it is also a Latin problem for considerable areas. It should be studied carefully, for we are now unprepared to answer the question whether, in general, it is educationally wise to prescribe the junior high school period as the best time for beginning the study of modern languages, except in cases of a reasonable expectation that properly qualified students² will continue the subject until they have completed a definite stage and are in possession of certain powers.³

The remarks of C. O. Davis on this topic⁴ are probably representative. After observing that practical considerations of pupils' needs indicate that various subjects, among them foreign languages, should be transferred to the junior high school, he adds, "It is a well accepted pedagogical principle that the time to begin a foreign language is in the earlier years of life, before marked self-consciousness has become an inhibitory factor in expression and before sensitiveness to the uses of the conventional forms of speech is acute. Moreover, in order that foreign language study shall yield the maximum of value, it needs to be pursued, at least by those who have a long literary career before them, for a maximum period of years. Begin-

¹ It should be noted that the class periods of the younger students were relatively much briefer than for the older groups, but this is an essential element of the difference in school level. The extensive data collected by Wood (*New York Experiments with New-Type Modern Language Tests*) on achievement in the junior high school could be utilized for a study of relative attainment if the same test were administered at higher school levels.

² By "properly qualified" is meant specifically those who have made a satisfactory showing in modern languages, both from the point of view of achievement and interest. A semester's trial, particularly if the results are in harmony with scores on the Terman test or some similar measuring instrument (see J. N. Jordan, *School Review*, XXXIII, 541), should enable school authorities to give helpful advice.

³ The Committee is gratified to observe that its general conclusions on this matter are in harmony with those reached by the Committee on Foreign Languages in the Junior High School appointed by the Commission on the Curriculum of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. See the report in the *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, 1927, pp. 291-314, and especially pp. 299-300.

⁴ *Junior High School Education*, World Book Co., 1924.

ning the study in the seventh or eighth grades permits both of these conditions to be met" (pp. 119-120). We may probably accept this paragraph as representing in a general way the position of modern language teachers and of many educationists.

Continuance and discontinuance by junior high school pupils. — One of the arguments in favor of the junior high school is that the expanded and varied curriculum should operate to hold pupils longer in school than the traditional elementary program has done.¹ In this connection, the question of the length of the period of study is of undeniable importance in modern language work. If the pupil who begins in the seventh or in the eighth grade drops out after one or two years, it is not likely that he has gained much skill in the use of the language, and if many discontinue, there is evidently something wrong with the administration of the schools, or with the organization of the modern language course, or with the instruction, or with the students themselves, for if continuity over a period of time is essential at any stage of foreign language study, it surely is essential at this stage. In view of the fact that the foreign language situation in the junior high school is in a state of flux and that growth in school population at this level is so rapid as to defy the gathering of reliable figures on a wide scale, the Investigating Committee sought to secure from a few school systems in which the junior high school work in foreign languages is well established some enrollment data which would reveal the subsequent language history of a considerable number of beginners. However, no such data were accessible. It would be of the first importance to administrative officers, to curriculum committees and the like to know for how long the subject is continued by the majority of those who begin in the seventh or in the eighth grade. Those who begin in Grade 9 may be left out of account in this connection, for they are merely continuing the tradition of the four year high school.

If the evidence should indicate that the number of seventh or of eighth grade beginners who continue for more than two years is relatively small, we would not necessarily conclude that foreign languages should be dropped from the junior high school curriculum, but most certainly that as a prerequisite to any remedial measures, steps should be taken to ascertain the reasons in the case of a considerable number of individuals. We might then be able to decide whether these measures should take the form of restricting admission to the courses, or of offering the courses only when well-equipped teachers can be provided — which would appear in any case to be an elementary condition — or of modifying course-content and method, or of a stricter administrative oversight of the second and third year programs of all pupils, in the interests of a logical and profitable continuity of effort.

¹ Cf. C. O. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

Although we do not possess from schools and systems in which junior high school modern language work is well established the details on pupil history that would be necessary for more definite judgments, the Study Committee has gathered a good deal of data as a part of the analysis of secondary school enrollment. Table 8 gives for the first, second and third years of study the enrollments in all the modern foreign languages combined, as it occurs in the three grades of junior high school. Table 9 gives the same information for Latin. The figures in these tables were gathered directly from the schools by the Study's enrollment survey in 1925.¹

TABLE 8

ENROLLMENT IN THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL DISTRIBUTED AS IT OCCURRED IN THE FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD YEARS OF STUDY AND IN THE SEVERAL GRADES, IN THE SPRING OF 1925. ARRANGED BY REGIONS WITH NATIONAL SUMMARIES.

REGION	7TH GRADE	8TH GRADE		9TH GRADE		
	1st year	1st year	2nd year	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
New England	3,058	3,042	2,561	2,058	1,325	1,639
Middle Atlantic	381	11,328	157	9,011	3,521	97
South	65	1,087	....	762	392	....
North Central	829	1,270	485	2,152	400	250
West Central	38	247	10	784	59	....
Southwest	426	2,684	252	840	580	116
Northwest . . . . .	....	....	....	41	....	....
California	1,356	3,166	952	3,883	1,544	634
National Summary	6,153	22,824	4,417	19,531	7,821	2,736

SUMMARY BY GRADES AND BY YEARS.

YEAR	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	TOTAL BY YEARS
1	6,153	22,824	19,531	48,508
2	....	4,417	7,821	12,238
3	....	....	2,736	2,736
Total by grades	6,153	27,241	30,088 ²	63,482

¹ The figures shown in Tables 8 and 9 were assembled directly from the schedules returned by the junior high schools. It will be noted that the totals are somewhat smaller, both for the total registration and the language enrollments, than those shown on Table 7. The differences, which are not significant, are due to the omission from the tabulation by grades of a small number of pupils in Grade 10 and of total enrollments in those junior high schools which returned foreign language pupils in Grade 10 only. These cases were included in Table I of *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages* and in Table 7 above, which was drawn from this source.

² The figures for enrollment by years in Grades 7, 8, 9 of the 1155 junior-senior high schools from which returns are available (see Wheeler, *Enrollment in the Foreign Languages*, Table I) lead to similar conclusions. For French and for Spanish combined, no account being taken of beginners in the 9th grade, the enrollments are as follows: (continued at bottom of p. 38)

TABLE 9

ENROLLMENT IN LATIN IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, DISTRIBUTED AS IT OCCURRED IN THE FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD YEARS OF STUDY AND IN THE SEVERAL GRADES IN THE SPRING OF 1925. ARRANGED BY REGIONS WITH NATIONAL SUMMARIES.

REGION	7TH GRADE	8TH GRADE		9TH GRADE		
	1st year	1st year	2nd year	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
New England	1,355	1,877	752	2,301	762	603
Middle Atlantic	464	4,523	141	5,590	1,365	135
South	150	1,462	91	1,829	333	71
North Central	1,368	4,096	930	7,190	1,459	365
West Central	408	520	80	2,659	210	42
Southwest	110	1,560	178	627	407	85
Northwest	81	27	36	520	25	27
California	241	549	162	1,821	315	81
National Summary	4,177	14,614	2,370	22,537	4,926	1,409

SUMMARY BY GRADES AND BY YEARS.

YEAR	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	TOTAL BY YEARS
1	4,177	14,614	22,537	41,328
2	....	2,370	4,926	7,296
3	....	....	1,409	1,409
Total by grades	4,177	16,984	28,872	50,033

From Table 8 we learn that 6153 pupils were in their first year of modern language in Grade 7, 4417 in their second year in Grade 8, and 2736 in their third year in Grade 9. In other words we may infer that about 72 per cent of those who begin in Grade 7 will continue the subject in Grade 8, and that about 44 per cent will do a third year in Grade 9. This represents a definitely higher proportion of continuity than is shown for the public secondary field as a whole. On the other hand, there were 22,824 pupils in first year modern language classes in Grade 8 and 7821 in second year

(continued footnote from p. 37)

YEAR	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	GRADE 9
1	1,755	2,262	....
2	....	681	1,233
3	....	....	325

The falling-off from 1st year in Grade 7 to 2nd year in Grade 8 is 61 per cent and 50 per cent from second year in Grade 8 to third year in Grade 9. The falling-off from first year in Grade 8 to second year in Grade 9 is about 45 per cent.

in Grade 9. That is, only 34 per cent of those who began in Grade 8 might be expected to continue for a second year in Grade 9, which represents a very low relative percentage of continuance, and gives emphasis to the suggestion that this question should be studied in all junior high school centers in which foreign languages are taught.¹

The situation as shown for Latin in Table 9 is much the same, although somewhat less favorable with respect to continuance. The second year group in Grade 8 is 57 per cent of the first year group in Grade 7, while the third year group in Grade 9 is 34 per cent of the beginning group. The drop from first year enrollment in Grade 8 to second year in Grade 9 is about 66 per cent, approximately the same as for the modern languages.

The enrollment figures from the Wood testing experiment in the junior high schools of New York City supply the only other accessible evidence on this point. In June, 1925 he tested 3736 French pupils in 8A, and 2177 in 9A in June, 1926, a falling off of 42 per cent. The corresponding numbers in 8B in June, 1925, were 3041, and in 9B in June, 1926, 1723, or a drop of 43 per cent. The falling-off in junior high school Spanish for the same period was much larger: from 1486 in 8A in 1925 to 489 in 9A a year later, a drop of 67 per cent, and from 1332 in 8B in June, 1925, to 426 in 9B in June, 1926, or a falling-off of 68 per cent (Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 5, 323). According to these figures, the number of pupils beginning in Grade 8 who discontinue before the end of the third semester are, in French, comparable to the numbers discontinuing modern languages after one year in all public secondary schools. The falling-off in Spanish after one year is even greater. The French and the Spanish figures for the New York City junior high schools are, if taken together — a loss of 49 per cent in the two combined — less impressive than the falling off from first year in Grade 8 to second year in Grade 9 in junior high school modern language work as it is disclosed by the Study data. The loss in Spanish is, however, quite as great, and even the drop of 42 per cent in French from first to second year in New York City is thoroughly alarming, for it indicates a much lower degree of continuation, even through a second year, than the advocates of foreign language in the junior high school consider indispensable. "The two-year course or the three-year course in the junior high school,"² says the Committee of the N. E. A. on Foreign Languages in the

¹ Unquestionably the rapid increase in the number of junior high schools and consequently of the number of pupils beginning foreign languages at this stage must be taken into account, and only when the situation is more stable can trustworthy data be secured for the country as a whole. At the same time this consideration makes it only the more necessary to assemble data for cities and regions in which junior high schools have been in operation on a stable basis for some years and to study the question of continuance in the subject with full knowledge of local conditions.

² *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, pp. 299, 300, *passim*. The supervisor of modern languages in one important center writes: "Junior high school students are practically obliged to take the whole second year of senior high school work in order to save their previous credits in foreign languages. Those junior high school students who go on in third and fourth years (of whom there are lamentably few) would seem to have the advantage" (over those who begin later).

Junior High School, "may be accepted as introductory to continued work in the senior high school, and so, not in itself a 'course' properly so termed. . . . The best teachers of a foreign language will not . . . be satisfied with less than the four-year course begun in Grade 9, the five-year course begun in Grades 7 or 8, or the six-year course begun in Grade 7."

If we take the table of enrollment in Latin by grades and by years for all public secondary schools (p. 21), we see that there is a 40 per cent drop at the end of the first year, that 29 per cent of the second-year enrollment — which amounts to 17 per cent of the first-year enrollment — are enrolled in the third year; that the fourth-year enrollment is somewhat more than 45 per cent of the third-year enrollment and about 7.5 per cent of the first-year enrollment. If we then take the history only of those who begin in Grade 9 (230,390 students), we find a situation that is closely parallel. The second-year enrollment is 60 per cent of the first, the third-year enrollment is 28 per cent of the second, the fourth-year enrollment is 55 per cent of the third and about 9 per cent of the first. The chief loss comes, as in modern languages, after the second year: the third-year enrollment in Latin is about 17 per cent of the first; in modern languages it is slightly less than 16 per cent.

In view of the preceding analysis of the enrollment in junior high school foreign language classes, instruction in this field at this stage would appear to be wasted effort except in schools or in systems *where definitely higher continuity of study prevails or may be made to prevail*. In any event there is sufficient evidence to warrant the belief that the degree of continuance in the case of pupils who begin foreign languages in Grades 7 and 8 is so low that it should be one of the main endeavors of school authorities to discover the causes and to seek the remedies. The figures given above are in any case disquieting. We have taken note of the position of the Junior High School Committee of the N. E. A. (see above, p. 39 note), which, with the exception of one modern language member and two classicists, favors beginning foreign languages in Grade 7 and insists vigorously upon the necessity of continuation in the subject.

Attainment of objectives in junior high school. — At the present writing the evidence in regard to the effect upon attainment of beginning modern languages in Grades 7 or 8, in so far as attainment has been tested in an objective way, is too obscure to be interpreted as favoring or as adverse to this practice. If a considerable speaking knowledge is considered one of the principal objectives, — which certainly can not be the case for the majority in a two-year course, — and if conditions of time and teacher equipment are such as to make this objective valid, it may well be maintained that the consensus of opinion and the probabilities favor an early beginning. It is no doubt true also that the pupil can better spare the time for intensive modern language work of this type during the junior

high school period than later when other subjects demanding maturity of judgment are clamoring for a place on his program.¹ It is difficult to speak categorically of the relative values of different subjects, aside from the fundamental processes, but if it is true, as can hardly be doubted, that foreign language work requires a considerable period of incubation to attain its full effect, particularly on the oral side, teachers of the subject may well demand that provision for that purpose be made somewhere. At the high school stage, for one reason or another, this ripening process takes place, as we have seen, in the case of relatively few students. There is much ground for fearing, in the light of the accessible data, that the same or different causes are operating to produce similar effects in the junior high school, so far as continuation in the subject is concerned.

Further evidence of the difficulty of formulating a clear-cut view on the question of modern languages in the junior high school is provided by the conflicting testimony of several experts in the field from whom the Committee sought light. One director of foreign languages in an important city system in the Central West, after proposing several arguments in favor of beginning the languages at this stage, adds: "In my frequent visiting in high schools I find that most of our best fourth-year students are composed of those who began in junior high school." Another writes from the same territory: "It is our experience that the pupils who begin French in the ninth grade are better prepared to continue the study of the subject and actually do better work than those who begin in the eighth grade of the junior high. We do not find that pupils take more French because they begin it earlier. We are now contemplating dropping all foreign languages from the eighth grade and substituting a year of General Language, which will lead to any foreign language in the ninth grade. . . . I find that fewer pupils than formerly now continue French for more than three years — hence it (i.e., beginning in junior high) will leave a longer period of disuse before going to college." A third expert in the West Central region testifies that pushing the languages down into the lower grades has not resulted in a longer period of study: "In X it has been found that pupils who begin the modern foreign language in the eighth grade take the customary two years and then drop it . . . in some of the high schools the number of pupils in third-year classes in modern language is so small as to cause the administration to wonder if they should continue to offer these classes . . . it is apparent that pupils are taking two years of foreign language now just as they did in the past, . . . they are doing

¹ On this point the Supervisor already quoted (p. 39) says, "If . . . we get into the practice of recommending a two-year course as late as the last two years in high school, we should certainly disappoint the hopes of many students desiring foreign languages. In our local course of study, few students find it possible to include foreign languages if they do not get them in the first two years of high school. So from a salvaging standpoint, we had better try to introduce the languages as far down as possible. . . . We know . . . that language is the study *par excellence* that requires long continued, uninterrupted application."

these two years earlier in their career. . . ." It goes without saying that the evidence of these witnesses is cited only to show how little is known on the subject, and how imperative it is that something be learned.

Necessity for further inquiry regarding foreign languages in junior high school curriculum. — Evidently it is one of the first duties of the advocates of foreign language instruction in the grades below the ninth to ascertain whether the evidence therefor as presented above is or is not representative of their own schools or school systems, and to attack the problem of continuance in the subject in the light of the actual facts. At the same time vigorous efforts should be made to ascertain whether or not the junior high school experience with the modern languages results in relatively increased power to use the language, in reading, speaking, or writing. Intensive as well as extensive testing would be necessary, testing at stages that would allow for the period of incubation, let us say in the fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters in senior high school, to appraise the relative attainment of those who had begun in Grades 7 and 8 and of those who had begun in Grades 9 and 10. The results of tests administered in English schools¹ tend to show that pupils with "prep" (i.e., previous elementary instruction) do better on the American Council Alpha French tests through the third year in secondary school than those without, but lose most of this advantage thereafter. This evidence is cited purely to suggest how insecure are the foundations of our beliefs in such matters, and how necessary it is to secure experimental evidence. In this case, and in many others of a similar kind, some evidence can be secured, particularly now that we have in the American Council tests instruments of a fairly satisfactory, though limited, kind with which to measure achievement at the various levels.

It must also be pointed out that relative achievement in modern languages by students who began in junior high in Grades 7 or 8 as compared with those who began in Grade 9 or higher has not yet been investigated thoroughly. Results obtained from Cleveland schools² show merely that, as appraised by the tests, the older students learn more French in a given length of time than do their younger comrades. It does not disclose comparative attainment after two years or more of study by students of equal ability under similar conditions. It would furthermore be necessary to test ability to pronounce, to understand the language when spoken, and to speak. Whatever doubts we may harbor with respect to the optimum method for beginners in the higher grades, it is generally admitted that a technique involving considerable oral work is best adapted for Grades 7 and 8, and an appraisal in the 10th or 11th grade of linguistic abilities developed by students beginning in the 7th or in the 8th grade as compared with those beginning in the 9th should, ideally, take into account as many of these phases as possible in order to arrive at trustworthy results.

¹ Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 252 ff.

² Cf. Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 215 ff.

At the present moment we are not in possession of reliable instruments for measuring progress in all these particulars.¹ We can, however, measure ability to write and to read, and, to some extent, ability to understand the spoken language. The field is therefore open for valuable and much needed experimentation.

It would seem that there is much uncertainty about the junior high school curriculum. Writers on the subject like C. O. Davis (*op. cit.*, p. 161 and *passim*), while asserting unequivocally that foreign language study is valuable at this stage, would nevertheless give preference to Latin over a modern language.

Teachers' opinions on validity and attainment of objectives. — In all, 465 secondary school teachers expressed themselves through their replies to the Selected Teachers' Questionnaire (cf. above, p. 18) on the validity of the list of objectives for first year, 524 for second year, 460 for third year, 352 for fourth year. The way in which the replies came in makes it impossible to reproduce a wholly satisfactory tabulation of the votes, but certain tendencies of opinion are quite manifest, as will appear from Table 10, below, in which the letters denote the objectives as already listed and

TABLE 10

VALIDITY OF THE SEVERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AS SHOWN BY VOTES OF SELECTED TEACHERS OF MODERN LANGUAGES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS. THE KEY LETTERS A, B, C, ETC., CORRESPOND TO OBJECTIVES AS LISTED ON P. 16. THE FIGURES SHOW THE NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO CHECKED THE VARIOUS OBJECTIVES AS POSSIBLE OF ATTAINMENT IN THE YEARS OF STUDY INDICATED.

Number voting	465	524	460	352	..	..	..	..	..	..
LENGTH OF COURSE	1 Yr.	2 Yrs.	3 Yrs.	4 Yrs.	1 and 2 Yrs.	2 and 3 Yrs.	3 and 4 Yrs.	1, 2, 3, 4 Yrs.	1, 2, 3 Yrs.	2, 3, 4 Yrs.
Objectives										
A	10	88	78	37	16	48	91	62	33	80
B	6	56	80	76	7	40	86	41	21	75
C	9	92	79	19	10	65	83	38	22	114
D	54	83	27	7	45	25	9	170	72	51
E	47	82	21	6	40	28	16	162	73	46
F	51	79	30	7	43	34	14	160	58	48
G	86	43	20	12	55	14	8	166	84	22
H	16	85	55	23	25	41	51	115	52	77
I	18	75	58	38	23	37	53	108	52	52
J	3	56	100	74	13	39	108	30	19	54
K	2	39	53	75	10	18	58	34	17	23
L	15	43	64	75	18	20	43	87	28	37
M	9	59	42	40	16	17	30	73	32	43
N	43	66	31	14	38	13	20	166	66	23
O	..	16	27	91	4	6	38	12	6	9
P	5	29	49	61	7	16	46	43	13	35

¹ But compare the evidence secured by the Canadian Committee, *infra*, p. 89.

the figures indicate the numbers of teachers who voted on the validity (i.e. possible attainment) of the various aims in the list. The directions were "Place a cross in each column marked 'validity' opposite each objective which you consider valid for modern foreign language courses of the lengths indicated by the headings of the columns." Unfortunately, many of those who replied, instead of checking only the two-year or the three-year course or the four-year course in each case, according to their judgment and experience, checked in two or more columns. Because of this the tendencies of opinion are less obvious to the eye than one might expect, but this very fact serves to illustrate graphically the confused state of professional opinion on an all-important question.

Results of one year of modern language study. — The number of voters who think that Objectives A, B, C (ability to read easily, to speak and to write the language) are valid (i.e. possible of attainment) in the first year is so small as to be negligible, being 10, 6, 9, respectively. The number of teachers voting who consider Objectives A and C (ability to read and to write) valid as the outcome of two years' work is slightly larger than the number who consider three years necessary. In the case of B (speaking ability) a clear majority of those voting (156) think that three or four years — the vote is about equally divided (80 to 76) — are necessary. By anticipation, it may be said that the judgment of secondary school teachers as to the percentage of their classes attaining the first three, or instrumental, objectives as shown below on Table 11 (p. 46) is much the same as above. Only 39 teachers (i.e. the sum of those voting read horizontally) of those consulted indicated their belief that 50 per cent or more of their first-year students attain Objective A; 14 expressed the same view in regard to Objective B, and 20 recorded a similar judgment with regard to Objective C. With respect to progress in ability to read, to speak, and to write the modern language, we may conclude, therefore, that in the judgment of the teachers consulted, it is normally entirely insufficient by the end of one year to justify considering these as valid objectives for a course limited to one year. This does not, of course, constitute proof of the impossibility of rendering some or all these objectives valid in special cases, particularly in classes of superior high school juniors or seniors who have definite interest in the subject from a given viewpoint, as, for example, that of acquiring the ability to read with considerable rapidity and ease. Nevertheless, as the teacher testimony cited above is corroborated by the scores made on the American Council reading, grammar, and writing tests in French, German, and Spanish (see below, p. 54), we may accept it as indicating the prevailing status of attainment in ability to read, to speak and to write in a one-year course in secondary schools.

The results of two years of modern language study. — We noted in the last paragraph that those voting on the validity of Objectives A and C (Table

10) are about equally divided between the possibility of attaining them in two or in three years (88 to 78 for A; 92 to 79 for C), whereas 156 out of 218 voted in favor of three years or more as necessary for attaining B. It will be noted that in the case of those voters who checked in more than one column, the numbers indicating a three-year course (combination of 2 and 3 with 1, 2, 3) as the necessary minimum for attaining A, B, and C is relatively larger than of those indicating a two-year course (combination of those checking 2 years with those checking 1 and 2: A, 104; B, 63; C, 102), while the four-year course group is the largest of all (combination of those checking 3 and 4; 1, 2, 3, 4; 2, 3, 4): A, 370; B, 278; C, 254.

By way of a further check on opinion in regard to objectives, the selected teachers were asked to indicate, in the case of each course, what percentage of their students is, in their judgment, actually attaining the objectives which they had previously checked as valid for courses of the various lengths. The resulting table (Table 11) is so unwieldy that only those portions have been reproduced here that relate to attainment in each case by 50 per cent or more of the students involved.

Of the 439 teachers expressing opinions regarding the percentage of their classes attaining Objective A in two years, 159¹ (36 per cent) expressed the view that at least 50 per cent do attain it. A similar view about Objective B was voiced by 79 teachers (18 per cent) and about Objective C by 176 (40 per cent). While it would be hardly fair to accept the converse statement as true, namely that the others believe that fewer than 50 per cent of their classes attain these three objectives in two years, it is none the less true that it is only a minority of those voting, and in the case of Objective B (ability to speak) a very small minority, who believe that even 50 per cent of their pupils attain these aims in the two-year course.

There is also another angle from which to consider this testimony. As contrasted with 10, 6, and 9 voters in favor of the validity for one year of Objectives A, B, and C, the following numbers recorded their belief (Table 10) in the validity for a one-year course of certain *indirect* objectives: D (increased knowledge of words and phrases found in English), 54 votes; E (increased ability to use English accurately), 47 votes; F (increased ability to use other languages), 51 votes; G (improvement of articulation and enunciation), 86 votes; N (development of habits of sustained effort), 43 votes. While these numbers are small as compared with the total number of returns, they are none the less set in relief by the still smaller vote of confidence in the validity of Objectives A, B, and C for first year. An equally striking contrast is presented when we compare the number of teachers who thought that at least 50 per cent of their first-year students

¹ This number is obtained by adding horizontally the figures indicating the number of replies in the two-year line. The table is to be read: 18 teachers estimate that 50 per cent of their students attain A in one year; 1 estimates that 60 per cent of his students attain A in one year; 57 estimate that 80 per cent of their students attain A in two years, etc.

TABLE 11

EXTENT OF ATTAINMENT OF THE SEVERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN SECONDARY SCHOOL BY CLASSES IN THESE LANGUAGES AS SHOWN BY VOTES OF SELECTED TEACHERS OF MODERN LANGUAGES. THE KEY LETTERS A, B, C, ETC., CORRESPOND TO THE OBJECTIVES AS LISTED ON P. 16. THE FIGURES SHOW THE NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO CHECKED THE VARIOUS OBJECTIVES AS ATTAINED BY 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 OR 100 PER CENT OF THEIR CLASSES IN THE YEAR OF STUDY INDICATED. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHERS VOTING WAS FOR THE ONE-YEAR COURSE 359, FOR THE TWO-YEAR COURSE 439, FOR THE THREE-YEAR COURSE 327 AND FOR THE FOUR-YEAR COURSE 180.

OBJECTIVE	LENGTH OF COURSE	PERCENTAGE OF CLASS WHICH ATTAINS OBJECTIVE						OBJECTIVE	PERCENTAGE OF CLASS WHICH ATTAINS OBJECTIVE					
		50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%		50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
A	1-yr.	18	1	2	9	6	3	I	22	5	4	22	11	19
	2-yrs.	55	13	9	57	20	5		60	12	7	55	30	31
	3-yrs.	59	8	10	81	37	22		38	10	9	66	28	50
	4-yrs.	20	5	5	37	28	36		12	2	4	28	19	43
B	1-yr.	9	..	..	5	..	..	J	10	1	..	2	1	3
	2-yrs.	39	8	4	20	3	5		38	7	8	25	7	8
	3-yrs.	58	8	10	44	9	14		52	7	3	57	22	15
	4-yrs.	30	5	5	24	13	22		23	4	4	34	18	19
C	1-yr.	6	2	1	8	2	1	K	6	1	1	6	1	3
	2-yrs.	82	15	11	43	14	11		21	1	6	13	8	7
	3-yrs.	47	15	11	67	36	32		26	1	6	21	10	12
	4-yrs.	23	11	6	29	24	32		14	5	2	20	8	12
D	1-yr.	46	13	7	61	25	35	L	19	..	2	19	5	13
	2-yrs.	54	12	15	98	47	60		38	4	1	31	12	23
	3-yrs.	33	10	2	53	65	79		35	7	3	36	15	33
	4-yrs.	7	3	2	19	28	46		11	3	3	15	14	34
E	1-yr.	55	7	9	31	11	23	M	13	1	1	19	2	8
	2-yrs.	75	9	16	64	33	34		33	8	4	26	16	10
	3-yrs.	44	12	13	63	36	42		30	8	6	35	11	20
	4-yrs.	17	6	3	28	21	33		16	2	..	17	14	19
F	1-yr.	50	7	7	43	29	34	N	53	7	10	50	18	11
	2-yrs.	63	14	10	60	39	66		59	19	9	83	46	17
	3-yrs.	28	7	7	51	29	79		24	13	8	67	36	37
	4-yrs.	13	4	2	19	14	54		17	2	2	24	23	33
G	1-yr.	64	7	11	56	25	51	O	..	..	..	..	1	..
	2-yrs.	62	14	6	88	30	50		8	1	..	3	1	1
	3-yrs.	26	5	8	60	37	59		11	1	1	7	..	1
	4-yrs.	12	3	2	25	14	40		13	..	1	5	2	2
H	1-yr.	27	8	3	25	13	21	P	2	..	..	2	2	3
	2-yrs.	68	11	6	74	38	47		15	5	3	8	4	6
	3-yrs.	37	8	9	70	40	73		23	7	2	16	5	6
	4-yrs.	12	2	5	24	18	60		10	1	1	13	7	10

attain Objectives A, B, C, with the numbers who record their judgment with respect to the percentage of students attaining Objectives D, E, F, G, and N (Table 11). Of those who expressed themselves on this point the vote in favor of attainment by 50 per cent or more was, in the same order, 187, 136, 170, 214, 149. The numbers expressing their belief similarly that Objectives A, B, and C are attained by 50 per cent or more of their first-year students are, it will be recalled, 39, 14, and 20 respectively. Contrasting similarly the number of teachers estimating attainment of Objectives A, B, and C by at least 50 per cent of their classes in two years (159, 79, 176 respectively) with the numbers making an estimate for a like degree of attainment of Objectives D, E, F, G, H, N, in the same length of time, we find that they run as follows: 286, 231, 252, 250, 244, 233.

While making due allowance for the fortuitous character of such estimates and for the fact that they represent opinion and not measured differences in achievement, we must bear in mind that they do represent, after all, the considered judgment of a considerable group of modern language teachers who, in default of definite measurements, have a better opportunity to make such estimates than any one else. The striking feature of the situation is, of course, that modern language teachers appear to have much less faith in the validity, even for the two-year course, of the three tool objectives — ability to use the language for reading, writing, and speaking — than in the validity of certain indirect objectives, highly desirable, to be sure, but which are not often the subject of testing in the classroom. Of those voting on a higher degree of attainment, 82 (19 per cent) estimate that A is attained by 80 per cent or more of their second-year students, 28 (7 per cent) make a similar estimate for B and 68 (16 per cent) for C. The corresponding figures in the case of Objective D are 205 (47 per cent); of E, 131 (30 per cent); of F, 165 (38 per cent); of G, 168 (39 per cent); of H, 159 (37 per cent); of I, 116 (27 per cent); of N, 146 (34 per cent), — at least twice as large in every case but two as the numbers recording their belief in the attainment of ability to read by a considerable majority of their two-year students.

The results of three and of four years of modern language study. — With respect to these same objectives, 140 teachers¹ (43 per cent) consider (Table 11) that 80 per cent of their classes attain A in three years; the vote for B under these conditions is 67 (20 per cent); and for C, 135 (41 per cent). These figures, when contrasted with the percentages just given for attainment in two years by 80 per cent or more students, make it clear that the smallness of the vote in certain cases is quite significant of what teachers think, particularly as regards general achievement in the first and in the second years, and the estimated attainment of speaking power even in the

¹ This number is obtained by adding horizontally the number of teachers estimating attainment of A by respectively 80 per cent, 90 per cent and 100 per cent of their pupils in three years (81 + 37 + 22). A similar procedure is to be followed for four years.

three-year course, for the vote in these cases indicates a real differentiation. The total number of voters on fourth-year attainment in secondary school is only 180, as opposed to 359, 439, 327 respectively, voting on the degree of attainment of first, second, and third year objectives. Of these the numbers estimating the attainment in four years of Objectives A, B, and C by 80 per cent or more of their students were 101 (60 per cent), 59 (33 per cent), and 85 (48 per cent) respectively. These figures are proportionately larger than those for third year recorded in the first sentence of this paragraph. But when we examine the vote for the degree of attainment of the other objectives as the outcome of four years' work, we find, as in the case of the one- and the two-year course, though less sharply accentuated by comparison with A, B, and C, surprisingly unwavering confidence in the attainment of Objectives D to J, and N, by 80 per cent or more of the students. The votes run, for third year: D, 197 (61 per cent); E, 141 (44 per cent); F, 159 (50 per cent); G, 156 (49 per cent); H, 183 (56 per cent); I, 144 (44 per cent); J, 94 (30 per cent); N, 140 (45 per cent); and for fourth year: D, 93 (52 per cent); E, 8 (245 per cent); F, 87 (48 per cent); G, 79 (44 per cent); H, 102 (57 per cent); I, 90 (50 per cent); J, 71 (40 per cent); N, 80 (45 per cent).¹ In other words, teachers voting on the three- and the four-year courses have as much confidence that 80 per cent of their students will learn to read and to write with some ease as they do that they will, to about the same degree, improve their use of English and learn another language more easily and develop literary appreciation. Even at this stage, however, they are more cautious about committing themselves positively on Objective B (speaking ability). The vote of 67 (20 per cent) for attainment in third

¹ These figures are perhaps more easily contrasted if assembled in the form of percentages. Attainment of Objectives D to J, and N, by at least 80 per cent of their students was voted for by 61 per cent, 44 per cent, 50 per cent, 49 per cent, 56 per cent, 44 per cent, 30 per cent, 43 per cent respectively of those voting on third-year accomplishment, and by 52 per cent, 45 per cent, 48 per cent, 44 per cent, 57 per cent, 50 per cent, 40 per cent, 45 per cent, of those voting on degree of fourth-year accomplishment. Of those voting on the attainment of Objectives A, B, C in three years by 80 per cent or more of their students the percentages are 43 per cent, 20 per cent, 41 per cent; in four years, 60 per cent, 33 per cent, 47 per cent. Of the other objectives, those voting seemed to have most confidence in the effect of modern language study on the ability to pronounce and understand foreign words and phrases found in English, and least in the beneficial effect on literary and artistic appreciation. They rate speaking attainment lowest of the direct linguistic objectives and attainment in reading and writing as about on a par with the lower of the other objectives.

By way of further evidence on this general topic, it may be added that 97 per cent of the 513 secondary school and 96 per cent of the 229 college teachers replying gave an affirmative answer to both parts of the question: "Do you consider that the study of a foreign language (two years or more) tends definitely to increase the pupil's knowledge of English grammar and of English vocabulary?" The Werner study (cf. Appendix to this volume) did not result in findings that altogether justify such unwavering confidence in this outcome. At the same time it must be observed that this experiment, to be conclusive, would have to be carried through on a larger scale and through a longer period of time. Whether the results would definitely strengthen or weaken the faith of modern language teachers on this score, remains in the domain of surmise, although one would expect modern language instruction, if conducted with this end in view, to aid definitely in increasing the student's understanding of English usage. Compare, however, the conclusions reached by Woody in *Studies in Modern Language Teaching*, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees on Modern Languages," Vol. XVII.

year by 80 per cent or more of the students, and 59 (33 per cent) for a like degree of attainment in the fourth, are in sufficiently obvious contrast to the numbers voting on the attainment of Objectives D to J, and N, by 80 per cent or more of their students.

There is evidently great bewilderment in the minds of modern language teachers regarding the point at which and the extent to which Objectives A, B and C may be counted as attained by a considerable majority of their students. It may be asserted with confidence that teachers of other subjects would display the same bewilderment if put to a similar test. This fact does not, however, diminish the significance of the data that have been presented and of the conclusions to which they point. Generations of experience have taught us little about methods of evaluating on a comparative basis the results of our teaching. The evidence is overwhelming that we must either abandon all hope of bringing this about, or that we must direct our testing efforts in very different channels from those that are sanctioned by use and wont. Moreover, as will be made clear later on, the testimony of test scores with respect to validity and attainment of objectives provides reasons for believing that teachers overestimate rather generally the achievement of their pupils. If we ask ourselves why members of the profession appear to be generally surer that 80 per cent or more of their students will attain the less direct objectives (D to J, and N) than that they will attain those aims with which daily class activity is most concerned, the somewhat pessimistic reply probably is that we test daily in the classroom progress in ability to read, to speak, to write, and perceive each day how slow it is for most students, whereas the fact that we can much less readily estimate the rate and extent of progress toward the other goals that have been proposed permits of a more generous allowance of faith in the attainment of the "substance of things hoped for."

The judgments of college teachers.—It is of interest to observe that college teachers appear to be more convinced of the validity of the reading, speaking and writing objectives for the two-year course than their colleagues in secondary schools. Of the 235 replies, 93 per cent considered the reading objective valid for four semesters, while the speaking and writing objectives were considered valid by 94 per cent and 87 per cent respectively. Objectives D, E, F, G, H, I, J and O were considered valid for the two-year college course by from 77 per cent to 93 per cent of the correspondents.

However, when confronted by the necessity of estimating the degree to which these objectives are attained by their students, this same group appears to be more cautious than when expressing a judgment in regard to validity. The number of persons who think that the reading, speaking, and writing objectives are attained by 50 per cent or more of their students

in one college year is so small as to be negligible. The largest number recorded is in the case of the reading objective. Of those who voted on this question for the three-semester period, only 28 per cent estimate that reading and writing are achieved by 50 per cent or more of their students. The four-semester vote is heavier. About 48 per cent consider that 50 per cent or more of their students learn to read and to write, and 19 per cent think that speaking ability is attained by the same number.

The numbers who record their belief in the attainment of the less direct objectives (E, F, G, N, I) by 60 per cent or more of their classes in two and in three semesters are noticeably larger than those recording a similar degree of attainment for reading, speaking and writing. The number of correspondents who believe that 50 per cent or more of their students attain the indirect objectives in four semesters is approximately equal to those who record the same degree of attainment of reading ability and of writing ability.

It appears then that the views of college teachers of modern languages on these points are in substantial agreement with those of secondary school teachers. A larger proportion of them endorse the three instrumental objectives as in their judgment valid, but very few consider that they are attained in less than four semesters by any significant parts of their classes, and fewer than 50 per cent of them believe that their efforts produce in two years the ability to read and to write by at least half of their students. We might well avoid attaching very great importance to these expressions of opinion if there were no other evidence, but when teachers in lower and in higher institutions are substantially in agreement and when their reasoned judgments are supported by the evidence derived from achievement tests, the two together offer the most substantial ground for reaching conclusions that has so far been provided. Since we usually assume that three semesters in college are roughly equal to six in high school, it is clear that college teachers are even more modest than secondary school teachers in their estimate of the extent to which the main linguistic aims are achieved in the number of semesters allotted by most students to the acquisition of a knowledge of modern languages.

Experimental evidence on the attainment of objectives. — According to the figures given above (p. 46) only 36 per cent, 18 per cent and 40 per cent respectively of the 439 secondary teachers who voted on the degree to which their classes attained the various objectives in two years would assert attainment of Objectives A, B, and C by as many as 50 per cent of their students. In view of the well established, if regrettable, fact that two years is now the maximum length of the modern language high school course for a very large majority of those who begin, we may well inquire whether there is any corroborating testimony in regard to achievement by second-year students of ability to read, to speak, and to write. The

existence of such evidence was referred to above (p. 50). The testing projects carried through on a considerable scale by Wood (*op. cit.*), by Cheydleur¹ and the Investigating Committee of the Study (cf. Henmon, *op. cit.*) provide more extensive data on the achievement by high school and college students in knowledge of vocabulary and of grammar, and in ability to read and to write, than have been hitherto available. For the text of the American Council Alpha and Beta tests and others that were developed beyond the experimental stage and for a full discussion of their derivation, readers of this discussion are referred to the publications just cited and to the official editions of the tests.² Only a summary of the testimony offered by the scores will be attempted here. The Wood tests (the American Council Beta and the Columbia Research Bureau) measure attainment in vocabulary, reading, and grammar; the American Council French Grammar Test, Selection Type (Cheydleur) is concerned only with grammar knowledge, as the title would imply; the American Council Alpha tests measure achievement in vocabulary, in grammar, in silent reading and in writing. The scores for second-year high school students in French, German, and Spanish as measured by the American Council Alpha, the Research Bureau tests, and the French Grammar test (Selection Type) create a very strong presumption that at least the lower 50 per cent of the classes examined have a very limited vocabulary range and a small functional knowledge of grammar, that their ability to read is extremely limited and that their ability to write a composition on a simple topic is correspondingly low. Limitations of space allow us to offer detailed testimony only from the administration of the American Council Alpha tests.³

The instrumental objectives. — Unfortunately, no precise score point in terms of grammar and of vocabulary has as yet been experimentally established as a dead line below which reading and writing ability may be considered as not attained. It must further be admitted that no one is as yet prepared to say what score ranges, even on the reading tests, mark the lower limits of ability to read. Readers of this discussion must themselves examine the passages that compose the reading tests (cf. below, pp. 74-84),

¹ Cf. Bulletin No. 35, Vol. XXV, of the University of Illinois, May 1, 1928, pp. 245-258.

² American Council Alpha and Beta Tests; American Council French Grammar Test, Selection Type; Columbia Research Bureau Tests — all published by the World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson; cf. the introduction of the present volume. For a full account of these tests, their derivation, reliability and the like, see Henmon, *op. cit.*, and Wood, *New York Experiments with New-Type Modern Language Tests*, The Macmillan Co. (1927). It is unfortunate that the vigorous efforts made by various collaborators of the Study Committee to develop and standardize tests of ability to pronounce, to speak, and to understand the foreign languages when spoken, did not reach a sufficiently advanced stage to provide the Committee with any conclusive evidence, although very promising beginnings were made, especially in regard to testing the understanding of the foreign language when spoken.

³ Readers of these statements must not infer that they constitute a reproach addressed to modern language teachers because of an important task badly done. There has been and will be ample evidence to show how complex the situation is and how vain it would be to attempt to explain on any single ground the low degree of attainment by a large number of modern language students.

but the conclusion appears to be inevitable that reading "with ease and enjoyment" would call for a higher power to comprehend the written foreign language than that indicated by the median scores, which represent, it must be recalled, the *maximum scores for one-half of the students examined at this level*.

Those to whom these pages are addressed will understand that the Study Committee labors under no illusion that it has constructed satisfying reading scales in the modern languages and has thus provided a definite basis for determining the degree of reading ability that is attained and that ought to be attained at the different stages in secondary work. No such claim is made or could be made. It would be indeed remarkable if it could fairly be made as the outcome of only two years' effort by a committee with many other absorbing tasks on its hands. Experimentation with reading scales in English has been going on since 1914, at least (the Thorndike Visual Vocabulary Scales, and Alpha 2 for Measuring the Comprehension of Sentences), and while much has been accomplished, especially at the elementary level, much remains to be done. In the modern language field only a beginning has been made. Since, however, little supplementary experimental evidence on the subject is accessible, the Study Committee, in the monographs by Wood and by Henmon and by Buswell and in the following paragraphs, presents for critical consideration the evidence it has been able to assemble, with the conclusions which appear inevitable, and confidently expects that this material will provide a point of departure for further and more searching investigations of reading ability in the modern languages.¹

Attainment in Grammar. — In order to provide more complete testimony regarding the best attainment in French, German, and Spanish grammar by the lower half of the groups tested at the various semester levels, the text of Form A of the three tests is reproduced below in the order of *increasing* difficulty as determined by an analysis of a maximum of 200 papers at each semester level. In each column of the table that shows the order in which the different items fell at the different stages, a heavy line has been drawn to coincide with the median score for that stage. This means that the best students in the lower 50 per cent of the year group in question answered correctly the questions down to that point, but since the scores of these students at each semester level range from 0 or from 1 to the median for that semester, it is clear *that by no means all* of the lower half of each semester group attain this high point. In other words, at each semester level the scores of the lower half of the group examined range all the way down from the median score to zero.

¹ For a critique of the type of reading scale used in the American Council Alpha tests, see Ruch and Stoddard, *Measurements and Tests in High School Instruction*, World Book Co., 1927, pp. 115-118. The study by Michael West, *Bilingualism* (op. cit.), will be taken up in another connection, but see this work (pp. 152-155) for a criticism of the paragraph type of reading test.

It is evident that the German test in its original form was nearer to the true order of difficulty than the French or the Spanish.

One might comment at length on various features of Table 12, but we shall call attention here only to some striking variations in order of difficulty at the various year levels as indicated by the analyses. Item 3 of the original test in French comes in sixth place for first-year students, twenty-third for second-year, thirty-second for third-year, and twenty-second for fourth-year! The more advanced groups make a much poorer showing on this item than the first-year group.

In the German grammar test, Item 10 fell in tenth place for second semester, third place for fourth semester and fifth place for sixth semester, whereas Item 1 fell in seventh place for second and fourth semesters and eleventh place for sixth semester.

In Spanish grammar, Item 30 fell in ninth place for second semester, in seventh place for fourth semester, in eleventh place for sixth semester and in twentieth place for eighth semester. The three tests are reproduced with the items arranged in order of difficulty on the basis of the composite scores of the year levels in question, thus representing as nearly as possible the true order of difficulty. It may be added that in each case the time allowed was ample.

TABLE 12

MEDIAN ACHIEVEMENT BY FIRST-, SECOND-, THIRD-, AND FOURTH-YEAR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ALPHA FRENCH GRAMMAR TEST, FORM A, AND THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF THE ITEMS.¹

IN THE TABULATION OF THE QUESTIONS, THE COLUMNS HEADED A, B, C, D, GIVE THE NUMBERS OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT REARRANGED IN THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY FOR THE FOUR-YEAR LEVELS, BEGINNING WITH THE QUESTION THAT PROVED TO BE THE EASIEST FOR EACH YEAR GROUP. THE NUMBERS UNDER E REPRESENT A CONSECUTIVE RENUMBERING OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE AVERAGE OF THE AVERAGES FOR THE FOUR-YEAR LEVELS. THE NUMBERS UNDER F ARE THE NUMBERS OF THE QUESTIONS AS ORIGINALLY NUMBERED IN THE TEST. THE HEAVY HORIZONTAL BARS IN COLUMNS A, B, C, D, INDICATE THE MEDIAN SCORE POINT ATTAINED BY EACH YEAR-GROUP. THE EXACT MEDIAN SCORES ARE: FIRST YEAR, 10.8; SECOND YEAR, 24.7; THIRD YEAR, 35.9; FOURTH YEAR, 39.9.

Table showing arrangement of questions in their order of difficulty by various high school years				Final order of difficulty		
A	B	C	D	E	F	
Years						
1	2	3	4			
5	5	5	5	1	5. (joli) Cette ville est bien	(
1	1	20	1	2	1. Que voulez-vous? papier (<i>mas.</i>), s'il vous plaît.	(
16	16	16	29	3	16. Nous ne voulons pas le voir.	(
2	12	29	12	4	29. Je connais la dame avec vous causiez.	(
29	29	12	11	5	12. Croyez-vous que c'est Pierre? Oui, je crois que c'est	(
3	20	1	20	6	20. Nous arriverons à Paris demain et nous passerons quinze jours à Paris.	(
17	2	6	33	7	2. Il y a neige (<i>fem.</i>) sur les toits.	(
9	9	23	9	8	9. Je connais la sœur de Pierre.	(
12	11	7	16	9	11. Je n'aime pas Louise. Je ne veux pas jouer avec	(
11	17	23	17	10	17. Il a oublié venir ce soir.	(

Rearrangement of questions in their average order of difficulty, based on the scores for 1, 2, 3, 4 years

20	23	9	23	11	6. (dernier) J'ai reçu votre lettre. ()
6	33	2	27	12	7. (partir) Mon ami et sa femme sont déjà ()
4	45	27	28	13	33. J'aime mieux L'autre n'est pas intéressant. ()
7	7	18	41	14	23. Nous n'allons plus au bois. (<i>Conditional</i>) ()
33	6	22	45	15	45. He would have liked to do it at once. ()
					Il a voulu le faire tout de suite. ()
					Il aurait voulu le faire tout de suite. ()
					Il voudrait l'avoir fait tout de suite. ()
					Il voulait le faire tout de suite. ()
19	32	30	2	16	3. Cet enfant n'a pas frères. ()
31	22	21	6	17	4. Dans cette forêt il y a beaucoup arbres (<i>mas.</i>) superbes. ()
32	36	45	7	18	32. des deux livres préférez-vous? ()
45	44	44	30	19	28. Il ne veut pas venir. <i>Future</i> ()
14	13	17	36	20	44. Our friend must leave at once. ()
					Notre ami faut partir tout de suite. ()
					Il faut que notre ami part tout de suite. ()
					Il faut que notre ami parte tout de suite. ()
					Il faut notre ami partir tout de suite. ()
21	14	33	44	21	27. Ils voient souvent leurs amis. <i>Future</i> ()
36	26	4	3	22	18. Nous irons bientôt Italie. ()
13	3	25	32	23	21. Il a acheté deux livres. <i>Present</i> ()
15	4	26	4	24	36. Write out the numerals in full on the dotted line: ()
					396 francs. ()

¹ All the test material reproduced in these pages is taken from the American Council French, German and Spanish tests, Forms A, Parts I and II. Copyright 1926 by the American Council on Education. World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York. All rights reserved. Because of considerations of space detailed directions and portions of the tests are omitted. Readers will find it profitable to secure copies of the complete texts and of the Manuals of Directions in order to understand more fully the exact nature of the testing experiment.

TABLE 12 (Continued)

A	B	C	D	E	F
	1	2	3	4	
18	27	35	43	25	41. It has been raining for three days. Il a plu depuis trois jours. () Il pleut depuis trois jours. () Il a été plu depuis trois jours. () Il a plu pendant trois jours. () 30. Qu'avez-vous vu? Je vais vous dire j'ai vu () 22. Elle <i>peut</i> le faire. <i>Conditional</i> () 19. Je vous donne trois pommes et je <i>garde deux</i> pommes pour moi. () 43. The doctor wants you to go to bed. Le docteur veut que vous vous couchiez. () que vous vous couchiez. () vous coucher. () que vous allez au lit. () 12. L'enfant ressemble à son père. () 26. Il <i>fallait</i> partir. <i>Past Indefinite (Conversational Past)</i> () 42. He left after finishing his work. Il est parti après avoir achevé son travail. () après avoir achevé son travail. () après avoir achevé son travail. () après ayant achevé son travail. () 24. Ces dames <i>viennent</i> à l'heure. <i>Past Indefinite (Conversational Past)</i> () 31. Des deux jeunes filles, j'aime mieux qui vient de sortir. () 14. Il a prêté le livre à Pierre. () 40. (durer) La grande guerre quatre ans, de 1914 à 1918. ()
37	40	32	13	33	
30	30	46	40	34	
24	24	19	26	35	
27	18	47	24	36	

28	19	36	31	37	39. Write the proper <i>past</i> tense form of the verb in parentheses: (pleuvoir) Il quand je suis sorti ce matin. ()
43	46	13	39	38	10. Les leçons des <i>petits garçons</i> ()
46	15	14	25	39	25. Nous <i>ouvrons</i> la porte. <i>Past Indefinite (Conversational Past)</i> ()
8	47	15	46	40	35. Il y avait là une voiture dans il est monté. ()
25	37	39	14	41	46. We shall stay here until he leaves. Nous resterons ici jusqu'à ce qu'il s'en aille. () jusqu'à ce qu'il s'en va. () jusqu'à ce qu'il s'en ira. () jusqu'à il s'en aille. ()
36	39	40	48	42	47. We hope to get home before it gets colder. Nous espérons arriver chez nous avant il fait plus froid. () avant qu'il fait plus froid. () avant qu'il fera plus froid. () avant qu'il fasse plus froid. ()
35	42	10	10	43	15. Donnez la plume à Louise. ()
38	48	31	50	44	8. (mettre) J'ai terminé ma lettre et je l'ai à la boîte. ()
22	49	48	15	45	XIII. Write on the dotted line at the right the <i>proper</i> form of the <i>verb in parentheses</i> 48. (envoyer) Quand vous chercher le médecin demain, faites-lui dire, s'il vous plaît, de passer aussi chez moi. ()
49	38	50	38	46	XIV. Change the <i>conversational past form</i> (past indefinite) to the literary past: 50. Le ciel est devenu tout rose. ()
34	25	49	8	47	37. 4875 hommes. ()
47	35	37	49	48	38. C'est aujourd'hui le 49. (savoir) Je ne ferais pas tant de fautes, si je mieux le français. ()
48	50	38	34	49	34. Voici le dictionnaire je me sers habituellement. ()
50	34	34	37	50	

TABLE 13

MEDIAN ACHIEVEMENT BY FIRST-, SECOND-, AND THIRD-YEAR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ALPHA GERMAN GRAMMAR TEST, FORM A, AND THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF THE ITEMS.¹

IN THE TABULATION OF THE QUESTIONS, THE COLUMNS HEADED A, B, C, GIVE THE NUMBERS OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT RE-ARRANGED IN THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY FOR THE THREE-YEAR LEVELS, BEGINNING WITH THE QUESTION THAT PROVED TO BE THE EASIEST FOR EACH YEAR GROUP. THE NUMBERS UNDER D REPRESENT A CONSECUTIVE RENUMBERING OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE AVERAGE OF THE AVERAGES FOR THE THREE YEAR LEVELS. THE NUMBERS UNDER E ARE THE NUMBERS OF THE QUESTIONS AS ORIGINALLY NUMBERED IN THE TEST. THE HEAVY HORIZONTAL BARS IN COLUMNS A, B, C, MARK THE MEDIAN SCORE POINTS FOR THE DIFFERENT YEAR-GROUPS. THE EXACT MEDIAN SCORES ARE: FIRST YEAR, 17.1; SECOND YEAR, 23.1; THIRD YEAR, 28.5.

THE GERMAN TESTS WERE ADMINISTERED TO FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD YEAR CLASSES ONLY, SO THAT IN THE TABLE ONLY FIVE COLUMNS (A, B, C, D, E) ARE FOUND INSTEAD OF SIX AS IN THE CASE OF FRENCH AND OF SPANISH.

Table showing arrangement of questions in their order of difficulty by various high school years			Final order of difficulty	
A	B	C	D	E
Years				
1	2	3		
3	3	5	1	
3. Not far from the shore there is a boat on the lake. Nicht weit bei dem Ufer schwimmt ein Kahn auf dem See ² () Nicht weit des Ufers. () Nicht weit dem Ufer. () Nicht weit vom Ufer. ()				

Rearrangement of questions in their average order of difficulty, based on the scores for 1, 2, and 3 years

¹ Copyright 1926 by the American Council on Education. World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York. All rights reserved.
² In the tests as published and administered all German words are in German text.

5	5	6	2	5. It is my mother's house. Es ist das Haus meiner Mutters. meiner Mutter. meinem Mutter. meinerer Mutter.	(((((
6	10	3	3	6. He does not hear the bell. Er tut die Glocke nicht hören. Er tut nicht hört die Glocke. Er hört die Glocke nicht. Er höre die Glocke nicht.	(((((
15	2	7	4	7. Then he cried bitterly, because he had lost it. Dann er weinte bitterlich, weil er es verloren hatte. Dann weinte er bitterlich, weil er hatte es verloren. Dann weinte er bitterlich, weil er es verloren hatte. Dann weinte er bitterlich, weil er es hatte verloren.	(((((
8	6	10	5	10. I went out when he came into the house. Ich ging hinaus, wenn ins Haus er kam. wann er ins Haus kam da er kam ins Haus. als er ins Haus kam.	(((((
7	7	2	6	15. May I look at your lovely pictures? Dürfte ich mir Ihre schönen Bilder ansehen? Dürfe Darf Darfe	(((((

TABLE 13 (Continued)

A	B	C	D	E				
Years								
1	2	3						
1	1	13	7	1. Father has often wanted to see this town. Vater hat oft wollen diese Stadt zu sehen.....(Vater hat diese Stadt sehen oft wollen.....(Vater hat diese Stadt oft sehen wollen.....(Vater hat oft diese Stadt wollen zu sehen.....(2. If I knew that, I should take the money. Wenn ich wüsste das, nähme ich das Geld.....(Wenn ich das wüsste, nähme ich das Geld.....(Wenn ich das weiss, nehme ich das Geld.....(Wenn ich das wusste, nähme ich das Geld.....(8. Has he come home yet? Hat er schon nach Hause gekommen?.....(Ist er schon nach Hause gekommen?.....(Ist er schon nach Hause gekommt?.....(Hat er schon nach Hause gekommt?.....(4. Frederick Barbarossa died in 1190. Friedrich Barbarossa starb im Jahre 1190.....(in den Jahren 1190.....(in den Jahr 1190.....(ins Jahr 1190.....(10	13	9	10	
11	4	20	9					
18	12	18	8					

4	14	1	11	18. To whom did you give it? Zu wem } Wen } Wer } Wem }	() () () () ()
2	15	4	12	12. They thought I was going to fall on my back. Sie dachten, { ich fälle auf den Rücken. ich fiel auf den Rücken. ich werde auf den Rücken gefallen. ich würde auf den Rücken fallen.	() () () () ()
14	21	12	13	14. He has not been able to come to town. Er kann nicht zur Stadt gekommen sein. Er hat nicht zur kommen Stadt können. Er hat nicht zur Stadt kommen können. Er hat zur Stadt nicht kommen gekonnt.	() () () () ()
9	8	15	14	11. He has gone to sleep in my room. Er hat in meinem Zimmer eingeschlafen. Er ist in meinem Zimmer eingeschlafen ein. Er hat in meinem Zimmer eingeschlafen. Er ist in meinem Zimmer eingeschlafen.	() () () () ()
12	11	11	15	9. You acted as if you were at least a king. Du tatest, als ob du zum mindesten ein König { seid wärest. sein würdest. gewesen wärest.	() () () ()

21	22	19	20	27. I have nothing good to report of him. Ich habe nichts { von gutem über ihn zu berichten { Gutes { gute { Gut	((((((
23	36	21	21	19. He is the most careful one of all. Er ist der { meist vorsichtig von allen. { vorsichtigere { vorsichtigste { vorsichtigsten	((((((
27	19	22	22	20. Some people are unscrupulous. Manche Leute sind { gewissenlose. { gewissenlosen. { gewissenloser. { gewissenlos	((((((
16	20	24	23	22. I am putting my things on your table. Ich lege meine Sachen auf { deinem Tisch. { deinen Tisch. { deiner Tisch. { dein Tisch.	((((((
28	35	16	24	16. A wise man knows himself. Ein weiser Mann { kennt ihn selbst. { weiss sich selbst. { kennt sich selbst. { kennt selbst.	((((((

TABLE 13 (Continued)

A	B	Years		D	E
		1	2		
20	16	30	25	23.	"Give me some water," he said to the boy. "Gibst mir Wasser," } sagte er zum Knaben. () "Gebe mir Wasser," } () "Gebt mir Wasser," } () "Gib mir Wasser," } ()
30	25	34	26	30.	We have read about Charlemagne, the first German emperor. Wir haben von Karl dem Grossen gelesen der erste deutsche Kaiser () dem ersten deutschen Kaiser () dem erstem deutschen Kaiser () den ersten deutschen Kaiser ()
35	28	23	27	24.	This work is always done by our youngest pupils. Diese Arbeit wird immer getan von unsern jüngsten Schülern. () werde immer von unsern jüngsten Schülern getan () wird immer von unsern jüngsten Schülern getan () ist immer von unsern jüngsten Schülern getan ()
13	30	27	28	28.	It is not your table, but ours. Es ist nicht Ihr Tisch, sondern { unseren () unseres () unserer () unsere ()

TABLE 13 (Continued)

A	B	Years		D	E
		1	2		
42	41	31	34		37. They came running from all sides. Sie kamen { gelaufen von allen Seiten () laufen von allen Seiten () von allen Seiten laufend () von allen Seiten gelaufen ()
48	24	32	35		31. Had I been able to go, this would never have happened. Hätte ich gehen können, so wäre dies nie geschehen () Wenn ich gehen können hätte, so wäre dies nie geschehen () Wenn ich hätte gehen können, so würde dies nie geschehen () Hätte ich gehen können, so wäre dies nie geschehen sein ()
24	33	29	36		41. Let us send money to the poor. Lass uns Geld zu die Armen schicken () Lasst uns schicken Geld an die Armen () Lass uns den Armen Geld schicken () Lass uns Geld nach den Armen schicken ()
31	37	41	37		29. If they had not been defeated, peace would not have been made. Wenn sie nicht besiegt { worden seien, wäre kein Friede geschlossen worden () worden wären, wäre kein Friede geschlossen worden () wurden, wäre kein Friede geschlossen () gewesen wären, würde kein Friede geschlossen sein ()

29	39	29	38	33. He became the greatest of our poets. Er wurde { den grössten unserer Dichter.....(der grösste unseres Dichters.....(der grösste unserer Dichter.....(am grössten unserer Dichter.....()
33	26	42	39	39. Could you be here at three o'clock? Können Sie um drei Uhr hier sein?.....(Könnten Sie um drei Uhr hier sein?.....(Könnten Sie sein um drei Uhr hier?.....(Konnten Sie um drei Uhr hier sein?.....()
39	29	35	40	42. I can't get rid of this man. Ich kann von diesem Mann nicht los bekommen.....(Ich kann diesem Mann nicht los werden.....(Ich kann diesen Mann nicht los werden.....(Ich kann dieses Mannes nicht werden los.....()
43	42	48	41	26. He said that she was going to have a house built. Er sagte, { sie werde sich ein Haus bauen lassen.....(sie wird sich bauen lassen ein Haus.....(sie werde sich ein Haus gebaut haben.....(sie wollte sich ein Haus gebaut haben.....()
47	38	45	42	43. Here is a bottle of good wine. Hier ist eine Flasche { guter Wein.....(gutes Wein.....(von guter Wein.....(des guten Wein.....()

50	50	46	47	44. I have the names of those who are here. Ich habe die Namen deren die hier sind. derer. dessen. des.	(((((
49	49	49	48	46. None of the houses withstood the tempest. Keines des Hauses widerstand dem Sturm. Keines der Häuser. Keine der Häuser. Kein der Häuser.	(((((
			49	50. Let him come and hear the king's command. Lass ihn komme und höre des Königs Befehl. Er käme und hörte des Königs Befehl. Er komme und höre des Königs Befehl. Lassen ihn kommen und des Königs Befehl hören.	(((((
			50	49. The boy was helped by his friend. Dem Knaben wurde von seinem Freund geholfen. Den Knaben wurde. Der Knabe wurde. Des Knaben wurde.	(((((

TABLE 14

MEDIAN ACHIEVEMENT BY FIRST-, SECOND-, THIRD-, AND FOURTH-YEAR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ALPHA SPANISH GRAMMAR TEST, FORM A,¹ AND THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF THE ITEMS.

IN THE TABULATION OF THE QUESTIONS, THE COLUMNS HEADED A, B, C, D, GIVE THE NUMBERS OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT REARRANGED IN THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY FOR THE FOUR-YEAR LEVELS, BEGINNING WITH THE QUESTION THAT PROVED TO BE THE EASIEST FOR EACH YEAR GROUP. THE NUMBERS UNDER E REPRESENT A CONSECUTIVE RENUMBERING OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE AVERAGE OF THE AVERAGES FOR THE FOUR-YEAR LEVELS. THE NUMBERS UNDER F ARE THE NUMBERS OF THE QUESTIONS AS ORIGINALLY NUMBERED IN THE TEST. THE HEAVY HORIZONTAL BARS IN COLUMNS A, B, C, D, MARK THE MEDIAN SCORE POINTS FOR THE DIFFERENT YEAR-GROUPS. THE EXACT MEDIAN SCORES ARE: FIRST YEAR, 13.7; SECOND YEAR, 18.4; THIRD YEAR, 24.2; FOURTH YEAR, 33.

Table showing arrangement of questions in their order of difficulty by various high school years					Final order of difficulty	
A	B	C	D	E		
Years					F	
1	2	3	4			
1	1	1	1	1	1. Estudio lección..... ()	
7	6	7	7	2	7. La mesa de madera..... ()	
6	29	6	29	3	6. El libro sobre la mesa..... ()	

Rearranged in the average order of difficulty

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15	7	29	6	4	15. Nobody loves me. Nadie me quiere. ()
					No me quiere alguien. ()
5	15	15	10	5	No me quiere alguna persona. ()
					29. Write on the dotted line at the right the proper reflexive object pronoun that has been omitted:
					 levantamos a las siete ()
29	2	20	15	6	5. El café no caliente. ()
3	30	10	26	7	10. Mi tío y mi tía me han invitado a ir con ()
20	20	26	32	8	20. No he visto su padre. ()
30	32	5	23	9	2. Levanto mano. ()
4	15	32	49	10	32. ¿ de los libros prefiere Vd.? ()
2	10	30	2	11	30. Veo a la señora con Vd. hablaba. ()
10	26	2	20	12	26. Yo le conocía. (<i>Present</i>) ()
32	49	3	3	13	3. (inglés) La muchacha es la mañana. ()
48	17	4	4	14	49. Nos veremos mañana la mañana. ()
16	16	12	27	15	4. (sentado) El hombre y la mujer están ()
49	48	16	5	16	16. Corrí ver. ()
50	23	23	17	17	17. No me gusta viajar. ()
17	50	17	42	18	23. Me lo dice. (<i>Past definite, Preterit, or Past absolute</i>) ()
16	40	27	16	19	48. Lo dejaremos mañana. ()
45	27	18	30	20	50. No le hablo a Vd. a él. ()
23	3	49	50	21	22. Yo quiero hacerlo. (<i>Past definite, Preterit, or Past absolute</i>) ()
12	22	22	22	22	12. Rewrite on the dotted lines the following sentence, substituting the proper personal pronouns for all noun objects, direct and indirect. For example: Hablo a mi padre. <i>Le hablo.</i>
					Me prestó el lápiz. ()

TABLE 14 (Continued)

A	B	C	D	E	F
		Years			
1	2	3	4		
38	12	40	41	23	40. It has been raining for three days: Llovió tres días..... () Hace tres días que llueve..... () Hace tres días que ha llovido..... () Me alegro saberlo..... () 42. (decir) Salí sin nada..... () 41. Write on the dotted line at the right the proper form of the verb in parentheses: (irse) Yo quiero que él a casa..... () 21. El trae su libro. (<i>Past definite, Preterit, or Past absolute</i>)..... () 45. (venir) Saldremos antes de que ella () 13. Di los libros a los muchachos..... () 14. No puedo dar las plumas a las muchachas..... () 24. No hay nada. (<i>Past definite, Preterit, or Past absolute</i>)..... () 26. Yo le conocía. (<i>Present</i>)..... () 36. en el año 1925..... () 25. Le seguí. (<i>Present</i>)..... () 19. No me acuerdo su nombre. (<i>Proper Prepositions</i>)..... () 47. (tener) Si yo lo, se lo daría a Vd..... () 38. Write the proper <i>past</i> tense form of the verbs in parentheses: (lover) cuando salimos esta mañana..... () 37. Write out the date of the month: Estamos al ()
40	21	41	48	24	18. Me alegro saberlo..... ()
22	4	48	28	25	42. (decir) Salí sin nada..... ()
39	41	4	24	26	41. Write on the dotted line at the right the proper form of the verb in parentheses: (irse) Yo quiero que él a casa..... ()
25	47	42	47	27	21. El trae su libro. (<i>Past definite, Preterit, or Past absolute</i>)..... ()
13	48	21	21	28	45. (venir) Saldremos antes de que ella ()
14	25	24	45	29	13. Di los libros a los muchachos..... ()
27	36	47	12	30	14. No puedo dar las plumas a las muchachas..... ()
8	38	50	36	31	24. No hay nada. (<i>Past definite, Preterit, or Past absolute</i>)..... ()
37	45	19	46	32	26. Yo le conocía. (<i>Present</i>)..... ()
21	13	13	40	33	36. en el año 1925..... ()
24	14	25	19	34	25. Le seguí. (<i>Present</i>)..... ()
28	24	36	25	35	19. No me acuerdo su nombre. (<i>Proper Prepositions</i>)..... ()
36	37	45	14	36	47. (tener) Si yo lo, se lo daría a Vd..... ()
9	19	46	8	37	38. Write the proper <i>past</i> tense form of the verbs in parentheses: (lover) cuando salimos esta mañana..... ()
19	28	37	13	38	37. Write out the date of the month: Estamos al ()

11	46	35	39	46. (conocer) No hay nadie que me	(
31	47	44	40	8. Yo tengo mi pluma. Yo tengo	)
34	35	8	41	35. 538 duros.....	(
18	8	38	42	28. No lo hice. (<i>Past indefinite or Pres. perf.</i>).....	)
35	9	31	43	31. ¿Qué ha visto Vd.? Le diré	(
42	43	28	44	9. (ver) Yo le he visto.....	)
33	31	9	45	9. Ella tiene su cuaderno. Ella tiene	(
41	33	43	46	44. (estar) Yo sentía que Vds. enfermos.....	)
46	39	39	47	43. (llegar) Avíseme Vd. mañana cuando ellas	(
43	11	33	48	11. Pedro no quiere dejarlo. Quiere llevarlo con	)
47	44	11	49	33. Insert proper relative pronoun: No he recibido su carta, me sorprende.....	(
44	34	34	50	34. Le metieron en la casa delante de cayó.....	)

It seems to be an unavoidable conclusion from this exhibit that the lower 50 per cent of our two-year modern language classes give but a poor account of themselves in grammar, and that the corresponding portions of the more advanced classes do relatively little better. Of the 580 second-semester students tested for norms, 290 answered 11 questions or fewer than 11 questions of those making up the French grammar test; of the 674 fourth-semester students, 337 gave correct answers on 25 of the items or fewer; and 282 of the 565 sixth semester students scored correct on 36 items at most. In other words, unless the items of the test are less valid for secondary school than they appear to be on the basis of the textbooks and the judgments of teachers, the level of performance by at least half our modern language secondary students at the various year-stages indicates that our teaching of grammar does not yield encouraging results in knowledge of grammar. Readers must analyze for themselves the evidence provided by this exhibit and form their own conclusions regarding the topics in which the different year-groups are strongest or weakest. If the test could have been made twice as long, such an analysis would have greater diagnostic value, but even the present material suggests a number of interesting reflections, which can not find a place here.

Attainment in Reading. — From an analysis of the order of difficulty of the items in the American Council Alpha reading scales, as determined by the percentage of correct answers made to the questions on the reading passages, we may secure concrete testimony about the median level of reading ability attained by second-, fourth-, sixth-, and eighth-semester students in the country as a whole. The following exposition does not, of course, imply that one-half of every individual class falls below these levels. The ample body of evidence presented by Wood and by Henmon of the wide variations in individual and in class achievement, from class to class and from school to school,¹ makes it clear that such an inference would be totally unwarranted. There are undoubtedly fourth-semester classes in which the score of each member would fall above the national fourth-semester median, or even above the fifth! The foregoing statement means only that the number of correct responses to each item in the test by from 150 to 200 students at each level, chosen so as to sample several types of schools, has been accepted as representative of mean performance for the country as a whole. By selecting these students from particularly good or from particularly poor schools and classes, it would be, of course, easy to raise or to lower the averages by several points, but the aim was to secure testimony on representative ability.

We reproduce below the texts of the French, German, and Spanish reading tests arranged in order of difficulty as determined by an analysis

¹ See their monographs and, in this report, the discussion of the Organization of Classes.

similar to that made for grammar and give the percentage of secondary school students at the second-, third-, and fourth-year levels, replying correctly to the questions in each paragraph. It is thus evident that the best students in the lower half of second-year French penetrated but little further than paragraph IV, which 63 per cent of the second-year group read correctly; that the best in the corresponding part of the third-year group hardly went through paragraph V, which was read and understood by 45 per cent of this group; and that paragraph VI represents the furthest north for the lower 50 per cent of the fourth-year group. The gain in power to comprehend is evident as we go up the scale. An analysis of the scores of a larger number of students would hardly change these figures materially.

TABLE 15

MEDIAN ATTAINMENT BY FIRST-, SECOND-, THIRD- AND FOURTH-YEAR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ALPHA FRENCH READING TEST, FORM A, AND THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF THE PASSAGES.¹

I. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	77	92	96	99

L'hiver est fini; le printemps est arrivé. Les vacances de Pâques (*Easter*) vont commencer. La famille de Roger ira passer quinze jours à la campagne chez grand papa Richard. Roger est parti pour la gare à bicyclette; les autres viennent après dans le tramway. Le père prendra les billets au guichet et s'occupera des malles tandis que la mère se chargera des enfants et des valises. Puis on cherchera des places dans une voiture de deuxième classe. Chacun prendra sa place. Le conducteur criera: "En voiture," et le train partira.

1. Où est-ce que Roger passera ses vacances?
2. Comment Roger ira-t-il à la gare?
3. Qui s'occupera des enfants?
4. Que fait le conducteur avant le départ du train?

II. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	60	92	98	96

Il a neigé hier soir mais la neige a cessé de tomber pendant la nuit et ce matin nous sommes allés patiner (*skate*) sur le lac. Il y avait beaucoup de monde: des messieurs, des dames et des enfants. Quelquefois ceux

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qui patinaient tombaient et se faisaient mal, mais cela ne faisait rien, ils recommençaient toujours, car il n'y a rien de si amusant en hiver que de patiner.

1. Quand est-ce qu'il a cessé de neiger?
2. Pourquoi sommes-nous sortis ce matin?
3. Qui avons-nous vu sur la glace?
4. Que faisaient ceux qui tombaient en patinant?

III. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	23	69	92	95

Un pauvre aveugle n'avait que son chien. Un jour on lui vola ce compagnon fidèle et il resta seul. Il l'appelle: il se sent aveugle deux fois. Un passant s'approche de lui et demande: "Mon ami, qu'y a-t-il pour votre service?" L'aveugle lui raconte son malheur. Le monsieur se met en colère. Il dit: "Je suis juge. Si je peux trouver le voleur, je jure de le faire punir." L'aveugle dit: "Monsieur, la vengeance ne me donnera rien. Je ne veux punir personne. Je vous prie seulement de me faire rendre mon chien."

1. Pourquoi l'aveugle n'a-t-il plus son chien?
2. Que fait-il pour retrouver son compagnon?
3. Qu'est-ce que le passant promet de faire?
4. Qu'est-ce que l'aveugle aimerait mieux que la vengeance?

IV. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	30	63	73	78

Le lion, le loup et le renard étaient aux champs. Ils avaient très faim. — "Chassons (*hunt*) en commun," dirent-ils. "Nous partagerons les bêtes que nous tuons." Ils tuèrent un bœuf, une vache et un veau (*calf*). "Partage," dit le lion au loup. — "Sire, répondit celui-ci, à vous le morceau de choix, le bœuf. Moi, j'aurai la vache; le veau sera pour renard." "Tu crois!" s'écria le lion, en donnant au loup un terrible coup de patte, qui lui couvrit la tête de sang. — "Allons, à toi, dit-il au renard, partage, et sois juste."

— "Prenez le bœuf, Sire, dit celui-ci; madame la lionne aura la vache; et monsieur votre fils gardera le veau." — "Qui t'a appris, dit le lion, à partager si équitablement?"

— "Voilà mon maître, répondit le renard en montrant le loup; c'est ce professeur-là qui porte une si jolie casquette rouge."

1. Pourquoi les trois amis se sont-ils mis à chasser?
2. Comment le loup a-t-il partagé la proie?
3. Comment savons-nous que le lion n'était pas content?
4. De quelle façon le renard a-t-il arrangé l'affaire?

V. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	9	28	45	65

En chassant un jour dans une forêt, le roi Louis XIII rencontra un paysan fort naïf. Le paysan dit au roi: "Eh bien, Monsieur, les blés sont-ils aussi beaux chez vous que chez nous?" Le roi rit beaucoup. Il proposa au paysan une partie de cartes et gagna dix sous. Tout joyeux, le roi emporta ses dix sous pour les montrer à Richelieu. Quelques jours après, un messenger royal apporta au villageois soixante francs en or. Il les prit, les mit dans sa bourse et ajouta: — "Ils vous reviendront, Sire, ils vous reviendront. Vous mettez tant d'impôts (*taxes*) sur les pauvres."

1. Qu'est-ce qui est indiqué par la question du paysan?
2. Qu'a fait le roi pour ne pas le détromper?
3. Comment le paysan a-t-il découvert l'identité de son camarade?
4. Quelle preuve avons-nous que le paysan n'était pas tout à fait naïf (*simple*)?

VI. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	4	19	30	48

Dans une des rues qui descendent à ces quais de la Seine où naissait l'enfant qui ne sait encore aujourd'hui, après tant d'années, s'il a bien ou mal fait de venir au monde parmi cette multitude d'humains qui vivent leur vie obscure, un homme au vaste crâne et dont les yeux, profondément enfoncés dans des orbites en ogive, naguère jetaient des flammes et maintenant gardaient à peine une faible lumière, un vieillard, morose, infirme, superbe, Chateaubriand, après avoir rempli son siècle de sa gloire, s'éteignait plein d'ennui.

Parfois, descendu des hauteurs de Passy, passait sur ces mêmes quais un vieux promeneur chauve avec de longs cheveux blancs, les joues bourgeonnées, une rose à sa boutonnière, un sourire aux lèvres, bonhomme, aussi plébéien d'allures que l'autre était gentilhomme.

Chateaubriand, catholique et monarchiste, Béranger, républicain et libre penseur, voilà, écrit Anatole France dans le *Livre de Pierre*, les deux signes (*constellations*) sous lesquels je suis né.

1. De quel enfant s'agit-il dans ce passage?
2. Pourquoi les yeux de Chateaubriand ne jetaient-ils qu'une faible lumière?
3. Par quels mots peut-on caractériser l'attitude des deux vieillards envers la vie?
4. Marquez la distinction entre leurs idées *politiques*.

The situation in German is similar. The reading attainment of the median student of the second year is represented by paragraph III (53 per cent), of the third year by paragraph V (48 per cent).

TABLE 16

MEDIAN ATTAINMENT BY FIRST-, SECOND-, AND THIRD-YEAR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ALPHA GERMAN READING TEST, FORM A, AND THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF THE PASSAGES.¹

I. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3
	77	88	94

Einer von den Jungen lief und holte etwas Wasser in Kessel (kettle). Zwei andere sammelten trockene Holzstückchen, steckten ein Streichholz an und machten ein Feuer. Die Mädchen taten etwas Tee in die Teekanne und gossen das kochende Wasser darauf. Unser Tee war fertig, und wir aßen Brot und Butter und Marmelade dazu. Tante Marie hatte uns einen Kuchen mitgegeben, der sehr gut schmeckte. Wir waren sehr fröhlich und sangen und spielten. Als wir die Sonne im Westen untergehen sahen, packten wir die Teekanne, den Kessel, die Tassen und die Teller in die Körbe (baskets) und fuhren in einem Ruderboot nach Hause.

Answer in English:

1. Wer brachte das Wasser?
2. Wie war das Holz?
3. Was tat man in die Kanne?
4. Von wem war der Kuchen?
5. Wie verbrachte (spent) man den Nachmittag?
6. Wann ging man nach Hause?
7. Wohin packte man die Teller?
8. Wie fuhr man heim?

II. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3
	47	64	75

Zwei Bauern gingen zu Fuß nach der nächsten Stadt, wo sie viele Dinge zu kaufen wünschten, die sie in ihrem Dorfe nicht hatten. Auf dem Wege fand Peter

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eine Börse (purse), die mit Gold gefüllt war. „Welches Glück für uns!“ sagte Johann. „Für uns?“ erwiderte Peter. „Du irrst dich. Die Börse gehört nicht uns; sie gehört mir. Jeder für sich, Gott für alle.“ Mit diesen Worten steckte er die Börse in die Tasche.

Johann antwortete nicht, und sie setzten ihren Weg fort. Plötzlich wurden sie von zwei Räubern angegriffen, die sich in dem nahen Walde versteckt hatten. „Die Börse oder das Leben,“ schrie der eine von ihnen. „Wir sind verloren,“ sagte Peter. „Wir? Nein du, du bist verloren,“ sagte Johann. „Jeder für sich, Gott für alle.“ Und er entkam in den Wald.

Answer in English:

1. Weshalb gingen die zwei Bauern in die Stadt?
2. Worauf hatte Johann beim Finden der Börse gehofft?
3. Warum führte Peter das Sprichwort an (anführen = cite)?
4. Von wem wurden die Bauern überfallen?
5. Was verlangte man von den Bauern?
6. Weshalb verließ Johann den Kameraden?

III. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3
	42	53	76

Ein junger Bauer fuhr einen sehr eleganten Herrn über den See. Als sie eine Weile gefahren waren, fragte der Herr den Bauer, ob er lesen könne. „Nein,“ antwortete der Bauer. „Nun, so haben Sie ein Viertel Ihres Lebens umsonst gelebt.“ Der Bauer schaute in die Höhe und sagte, es würde sehr windig. Dann fragte der Herr, ob der Bauer schreiben könne, und als der Bauer es verneinte, meinte der Herr: „Dann haben Sie die Hälfte Ihres Lebens umsonst gelebt.“ Der Bauer schaute in die Höhe und meinte, ein Sturm werde wohl bald losbrechen. Zuletzt wollte der Herr wissen, ob der Bauer rechnen könne, und als der Bauer auch dies verneinte, sagte der Herr: „Dann haben Sie drei Viertel Ihres Lebens umsonst gelebt.“ Auf einmal brach der Sturm los, warf das Boot um, und die beiden lagen im Wasser. Nun fragte der Bauer den Herrn, ob er schwimmen könne. „Nein, mein lieber Freund,“ war die Antwort. „Dann haben Sie Ihr ganzes Leben umsonst gelebt.“

Answer in English:

1. Welche drei Fragen wurden an den Bauer gestellt?
2. Welchen Teil seines Lebens hatte der Bauer nach Ansicht des Herrn im ganzen umsonst gelebt?
3. Welche Veränderung des Wetters schien der Bauer zu befürchten?
4. Was geschah, als der Sturm losbrach?
5. Welche Kenntnis erwies sich als die brauchbarste?

IV. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3
	18	29	61

Als Napoleon mit Österreich über den Frieden von Campo Formio unterhandelte, nahm er plötzlich eine große, kostbare Vase, die neben ihm auf dem Tisch stand, und warf sie dem erschrockenen österreichischen Diplomaten der betraut war, mit ihm zu unterhandeln, vor die Füße. „Wenn Sie nicht nachgeben,“ rief er aus, „werde ich Ihre alte Monarchie zerschmettern wie diese Vase hier.“ Der österreichische Diplomat, der an die überraschenden Formen der neuen Diplomatie nicht gewöhnt war, beeilte sich, den für Napoleon nötigen Frieden zu schließen.

Answer in English:

1. Zwischen welchen Ländern wurden die Friedensunterhandlungen geführt?
2. In welcher Stimmung (Laune) schien Napoleon zu sein, als er die Vase zerschmetterte?
3. Welches Land ist mit der alten Monarchie gemeint?
4. Was bewog den österreichischen Staatsmann nachzugeben?
5. Was war das Ergebnis des Napoleonischen Verfahrens?

V. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3
	8	14	48

Im elften Jahrhundert waren dank dem Aufblühen der Industrie und des Handels viele Städte groß und reich geworden. Man begreift, daß diese Städte ungeduldig die Herrschaft der Lehnsherren (feudal lords) ertrugen, die ihnen schwere Steuern abverlangen konnten.

Die Städte kamen also auf den Gedanken, diese Herrschaft abzuschütteln. Wenn die Bedrückung eines Herrn zu groß wurde, brach eine Empörung aus. Wenn die Städte siegten, erlangten sie einen Freibrief, in dem geschrieben war, was der Lehnsherr zu verlangen das Recht hatte.

Die Bürger wählten dann einen Bürgermeister und einen Rat von Schöffen (judges). Man baute das Rathaus auf dem Markte und errichtete dort einen Turm, in dem man die Glocke der Stadt hängen hatte. Diese Glocke, bei der sich immer ein Wächter aufhielt, läutete die Stunde, wann die Lichter ausgelöscht werden mußten, verkündete Feuersbrünste, rief den Bürgermeister und die Schöffen zusammen und rief zu den Waffen, wenn die Stadt angegriffen wurde. Daher wurde dieser Turm, der das Wahrzeichen der Freiheit der Stadt war, mit besonderer Sorgfalt gebaut.

Answer in English:

1. Welchem Umstand verdankten die Städte ihr Wachstum?
2. Was verlangten die Lehnsherren von den Städten?
3. Was stand in dem Freibrief?
4. Wer wurde an die Spitze der neuen Gemeinde gestellt?
5. Weshalb wurde der Turm so sorgfältig gebaut?
6. Auf welche Weise wurden die Bürger von einer drohenden Gefahr benachrichtigt?

Reading power in Spanish at the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth semester levels is indicated by the percentages of students who replied correctly to the questions on the various passages. Of 200 fourth semester students, 49 per cent read and understood through passage IV; of the eighth semester group, 52 per cent read and understood passage VI and 44 per cent read and understood passage VII.

TABLE 17

MEDIAN ATTAINMENT BY FIRST-, SECOND-, THIRD- AND FOURTH-YEAR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ALPHA SPANISH READING TEST, FORM A, AND THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF THE PASSAGES.¹

I. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	74	88	91	94

Todas las semanas Ramón tiene que escribir una carta a su padre, en la cual le dice cuánto dinero necesita. Si él no le escribe, su padre no le manda dinero. Ramón está muy ocupado con sus estudios y solamente tiene tiempo para escribir cartas el domingo por la tarde. Por esto, todos los domingos al anochecer sale a la calle, llevando en la mano una carta.

1. ¿A quién tiene que escribir Ramón?
2. ¿Qué le dice a su padre en sus cartas?
3. ¿Qué hace el domingo por la tarde?
4. Si no escribe a su padre ¿qué ocurre?

II. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	57	75	82	80

Juan se despierta todos los días a las siete y en seguida se levanta. Va al cuarto de baño, donde hay agua caliente y agua fría, jabón y toallas. Después de tomar un baño frío, se limpia los dientes y se a cepilla el pelo. Vuelve a su cuarto y empieza a vestirse. Primero se pone la ropa interior y luego el traje y los zapatos. Ya está listo para salir.

1. ¿A qué hora se levanta Juan?
2. ¿Qué se necesita para tomar un baño?
3. ¿Qué hace Juan inmediatamente antes de a cepillarse el pelo?
4. Después del baño ¿qué tiene que hacer Juan antes de salir a la calle?

¹ Copyright, 1926, by the American Council on Education, World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York. All rights reserved. In terms of pupil response, the order of paragraphs III and IV as they appeared in the test has been reversed. The test is here given only in part.

III. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	30	64	80	87

Entra un andaluz en un café y pide de comer. A la mitad de la comida le dice al mozo:

— Yo te conozco. Tu cara no me es desconocida; pero no recuerdo dónde te he visto.

— No sé, — responde el mozo. — No tengo el honor de conocerle a Vd.

— ¡Ah! sí, hombre, ya recuerdo. Tú eres el que me ha servido la sopa.

1. ¿Tenía el andaluz hambre o sed al entrar en el café?
2. ¿Por qué cree el andaluz que conoce al mozo?
3. ¿Cuándo había visto al mozo por primera vez?
4. ¿Cuál fué el primer plato de la comida del andaluz?

IV. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	30	49	56	65

La mayor parte de las familias españolas celebran la Navidad. Ésta es esencialmente una fiesta religiosa. La víspera de Navidad es el veinticuatro de diciembre. Se llama la Nochebuena. Aquella noche la gente come turrón, mazapán y otros dulces. Por la noche van las familias a oír la Misa del Gallo. Ésta comienza a media noche. No hay por lo general Árbol de Navidad. El seis de enero, en cambio, cae la fiesta de los Reyes Magos y la víspera de esta fiesta los niños ponen sus zapatos en la chimenea, esperando a que los Reyes los obsequien con regalos.

1. ¿En qué día del mes cae la Navidad?
2. ¿Qué clase de cosas comen los españoles la Nochebuena?
3. ¿Quiénes sirven de Santa Claus para los niños españoles?
4. ¿Adónde van los españoles la Nochebuena, al teatro o a la iglesia?
5. ¿Qué esperan los niños recibir en sus zapatos?

V. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	9	32	45	53

Los árabes usaron principalmente para escribir el papel de fabricación industrial, en vez del papiro de los romanos. En Oriente se fabricaba desde mediados del siglo VII y en España no se importó hasta el siglo XI, en que hubo de fundarse en jativa la primera manufactura. Los libros se multiplicaron enormemente; y el afán de reunir las obras de muchos autores produjo la creación de grandes bibliotecas, propiedad de los reyes, de los

nobles y de las personas importantes. Como prueba de la gran afición a los libros que tuvieron los musulmanes españoles, baste decir que mucha gente vivía de la copia de manuscritos y que en Córdoba y en otros puntos había grandes mercados donde se vendían los manuscritos, que alcanzaban precios subidos.

1. ¿En dónde empezó la fabricación del papel en España?
2. ¿En qué escribían sus libros los romanos?
3. ¿Quiénes hicieron grandes colecciones de obras literarias en España en el siglo XI?
4. ¿Qué conclusión se puede sacar del hecho de que mucha gente vivía en aquel tiempo de la copia de manuscritos?
5. ¿Pagaban poco o mucho los que compraban sus libros en el mercado de Córdoba?

VI. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	6	23	42	52

Continúa con todo vigor la huelga (*strike*) de motoristas, guardas y otros empleados de las empresas de tranvías eléctricos. Hoy salieron algunos coches guiados por inspectores o ingenieros de las compañías; pero tuvieron que retirarse ante las manifestaciones que se les hacían, a pesar de ir custodiados por agentes de policía. Cerca del local de la Federación Obrera un tranvía atropelló un carro, lo que aprovecharon los huelguistas para promover incidentes que motivaron la intervención de los guardias civiles que lo custodiaban. Las piedras destrozaron los cristales; el conductor, atemorizado, desapareció.

1. ¿Quiénes se han puesto en huelga?
2. ¿Quiénes protegían a los inspectores?
3. ¿Qué sucedió para motivar incidentes cerca del local de la Federación Obrera?
4. ¿Qué daños materiales hicieron los huelguistas?

VII. *Percentage of Correct Answers:*

Years	1	2	3	4
	3	15	31	44

Se vistió la montañesa su ropa de diario: falda y chaqueta de lanilla a cuadros blancos y negros; y apenas había tenido tiempo más que para frotarse apresuradamente el rostro con la toalla y arreglarse el pelo ante un espejo todo estrellado por la alteración del azogue, cuando, oyendo dar las seis en el asmático reloj del comedor, salió de su cuarto andando de puntillas y bajaba la escalera que comunicaba con la cocina, en aquel momento

solitaria. Deslizóse por el corredor, pero apenas había dado tres pasos por él, cuando una mano musculosa, aunque llena y juvenil, asió de la suya, y se sintió arrastrada, en medio de la obscuridad, hacia la puerta. Salieron del caserón y, con deleite inexplicable, bebieron juntos la primera onda de fresco matutino.

1. ¿De qué material era el vestido de la muchacha?
2. ¿Para qué le sirvió el espejo?
3. ¿Cómo supo qué hora era?
4. ¿Quién estaba en la cocina?
5. ¿Qué hacía la muchacha cuando la asió su amigo?
6. ¿Qué tal era el aire cuando salieron?

If we attempt to represent in tabular form the reading attainment of the median student in each of the fourth-, sixth-, and eighth-semester groups, the result, in terms of the American Council Alpha reading tests, would be somewhat as follows:

TABLE 18

PERCENTAGE OF CORRECT RESPONSES AT THE FOURTH-, SIXTH- AND EIGHTH-SEMESTER LEVELS TO QUESTIONS ON THE READING PASSAGES NEAREST THE NORM FOR SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH YEAR IN FRENCH AND SPANISH AND SECOND AND THIRD YEAR IN GERMAN.

	FOURTH SEMESTER			SIXTH SEMESTER			EIGHTH SEMESTER	
	French	German	Spanish	French	German	Spanish	French	Spanish
No. of Passage .	IV-V	III	III	V	V	V	VI	VI-VII
Percentage of correct answers ¹ .	63-28	53	49	45	48	45	48	52-44

Attainment in Composition. — A similar attempt to give some concrete evidence in regard to achievement in the writing of French, German, and Spanish yielded the exhibits that are given below. A simple picture was set as a subject for an eight minute composition in each test. The French and Spanish tests used the same picture; the German test a different picture. In rating the results, composition scales² were used, by means of which an attempt was made to grade the compositions on a purely relative basis, with no attention to individual errors of any sort. The scales, which had been prepared on the basis of the judgments of a large number of teachers

¹ Read as follows: 63 per cent of fourth-semester French pupils read correctly passage IV, 28 per cent read correctly passage V, 53 per cent of fourth-semester German pupils read correctly passage III, 49 per cent of fourth-semester Spanish pupils read correctly passage III, etc.

² See the manuals of directions of the American Council Alpha tests in French, German, and Spanish for the texts of the scales and directions for their use. World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York.

regarding the relative merit of a considerable number of compositions, contain from 12 to 20 specimen compositions arranged in order of merit as determined by the judgments of the aforesaid teachers. When scoring, the readers endeavored to match each composition with the scale specimen to which it was nearest in general quality, but no fractional ratings were assigned. While this procedure does not banish completely the subjective element from the scoring, all the evidence tends to establish that it provides a safer basis for uniform grading than any other which would not be prohibitive in cost for general testing purposes.¹

The following representative compositions in French, German, and Spanish, taken at random from papers that have been rated as being as near as possible to the norm for the semester levels in question, are presented as concrete evidence of the ability to write the foreign language possessed by the median student in each group.

SPECIMEN FRENCH COMPOSITIONS²

Second Semester — Quality 6. Semester Norm 6.2

Un jour un vieille honne et son femme pauvre entendu la frappe a la porte. Ils allons à la porte et ouvrir Voila! Sur la terre réposée une planchet plein des fruits et la gateau. Ils sont très heureux! Quatre petit garçons était regardait et rirait. C'est la vieille d'avant Noel et il était très frois. Le petit garçons pensa le — honne et son femme — faime et ils décidé de porté.

Fourth Semester — Quality 7. Semester Norm 7.6

C'est Noel. Il y'a de glace et de neige sur la terre. Un pauvre vieux homme et sa femme sont sorti de sa maison miserable, et sur les étaires ils voient un.

Fourth Semester — Quality 8. Semester Norm 7.6

Les deux vieillards sont très heureux. Le paquet de bonbons providera un diner pour Noël. Les enfants dans le coin regardent le bon heure des vieillards. Ils sont aussi heureux. La châ regarde aussi avec un expression du bonheur. Les vieillards se sont habillés très.

¹ For a brief exposition of experiments in the use of composition scales in English, see Ruch and Stoddard, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-129. More extensive discussions are referred to in the bibliography, *ibid.*, pp. 131-135. The derivation of the American Council composition scales for modern languages is set forth in Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-62. For a study of the reliability of the French Composition Scale under various conditions, see F. S. Breed, "The Reliability of the Trabue French Composition Scale," in *Studies in Modern Language Teaching*, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," Vol. XVII.

² Because of considerations of space, only one specimen composition is given at each level except when the true median falls between the ratings assigned on the basis of a composition scale. It may be repeated that readers of this report will be greatly aided in following intelligently this whole discussion if they have at hand specimen sets of the tests and of the Manual of Directions. It is almost superfluous to add that the test papers from which were drawn the specimen compositions submitted herewith are in the files of the Study and may be inspected by persons who are interested. The quality score cited for each passage was assigned by the scorers who rated the compositions.

Sixth Semester — Quality 9. Semester Norm 9

Pierre et Margot, deux paysons aînés, demeurent à une petite village au Sûd du Provence. Aujourd' hui est la veille de Noël. Tous les autres villageurs sont gais, mais ils ne sont pas. Ils n'ont pas rien; pas de la monnaie et pas du pain, tous sont venus. Leurs enfants sont tous mort. Quand ils ont été jeun, ils ont donné beaucoup de choses, peut-être, trop de chose. Maintenant, ils n'ont rien pour.

Eighth Semester — Quality 8. Semester Norm 8.7

Une fois, il y avait une vieille et un vieillard qui demeuraient dans une vieux maison. Ils étaient très, très pauvre, et souvent ils avaient beaucoup de faim. Près de cette maison demeuraient quatre enfants, qui avaient beaucoup de riches.

Un jour, quand ces enfants jouaient près de la maison, ils voyaient les gens qui avaient faim.

Eighth Semester — Quality 9. Semester Norm 8.7

Il y a, quelques ans après, deux bons viellards. Tous les enfants dans leur village les amaient. Pour ça quand ils ont devenu trop agée pour travailler, et quand ils n'ont jamais aussi pour manger, les petits enfants lui ont pitié, et ont résolu de les aider. Un matin quand les deux ouvre leur porte pour laisser entrer la sommeil, ils ont vu sur leur petite balconne une supplie.

SPECIMEN GERMAN COMPOSITIONS

Second Semester — Quality 4. Semester Norm 4.6

Es gibt drei Knauben welche sehr schwer arbeiten. Sie bauen eines Haus. Sie haben näglen und Hämmern. Zwei Knauben tragen Bröter und der dreiter naglet die Bröter. Sie tragen die näglen in einen Soaf (box). Einer der Knauben tragt einen Kapchen und die anders nicht Alle haben schwarze Haar, und schwarze Schühe. Das Haus hat seben Fenster und ein Tür.

Second Semester — Quality 5. Semester Norm 4.6

Drei Knaben machen ein Hause auf einem Baum. Das Haus ist bald fertig. Einer von den Knaben ist auf den Treppen und halt ein Stück Holz. Der Zweiten ist in dem Baum und helpt die Ersten. Der Dritter nägelt. Das Hause ist ein bissel höher als der Knabe und hat zwei Fenster auf jede Seit except eine Seit und diese Seit ist nicht fertig. Das Baum ist seher gross.

Fourth Semester — Quality 5. Semester Norm 5.2

Drei Knaben bilden ein Haus in einem Baum an. Das Haus ist zimlich fertig. Ein Knabe auf einer Leider, gebt einen Stück Holz einem anderen

Knaben. Der dritte Knabe negelt. Das Haus hat sehr viele Fenster und ein grosse Thür. Das Haus ist klein, aber gross für einen Baum. Der Baum ist gross und sieht wie ein Eigenbaum an. Es ist in der Frühling und darauf der Baum viele Blätter hat.

Fourth Semester — Quality 6

Drei Kinder machen ein Haus. Ein Kind hammerte ein Nagel in einem Brette. Ein andere bringt eines Brett auf ein Latter und der dritte Kind helfte ihm. Sie werden machen ein grosses Hause wo sie kann heiraten später ins Leben. Sie kauften viele Furniture für dieses Hause und werden ein ganz schönes Haus machen. Sie kan im Sommer, wenn es ist zu heisz in die Stadt, in dieses kleinen Haus gehen.

Sixth Semester — Quality 6. Semester Norm 6.4

Hans, Fritz, und Johann wollten ein Haus in dem Baume bauen. Sie holten Holz für die Arbeit und dann machen sie ihre Pläne. Als sie alles haben dann fangen sie an. Johann brachte das Holz zu Hans und er gibt es zu Fritz. Dann Fritz hammert die Nagel in das Holz bis eine Seite gebaut hatte. Er tut daselbe mit dem anderen Seiten bis er ein schönes Haus hatte.

Sixth Semester — Quality 7

Diese Knaben haben ein grosses Geheimnis. Niemand weiss daran. Sie bauen ein Haus in einem Baume, wie die Vögel ihre Nester machen. Sie haben dem Holz von das Nachbardorf geholt, und haben es mit ihrem Geld gekauft, das sie lange erspart haben. Der Leiter gehört einem von den Knaben, der ihn von seinem Vater erhielt. Im kurzer Zeit wird es gefertigt sein. Da werden alle Knaben des Dorfes es bewundern, und werden neidig sein.

Solche fleissige Knaben verdienen etwas Gutes für seine Arbeit. Sie werden gut bezahlt, denn sie können den ganzen Sommer das Haus benutzen.

SPECIMEN SPANISH COMPOSITIONS

Second Semester — Quality 3. Semester Norm 3.7

Un hombre u una mujer tiene poco dinero. Une dia los niños y los niñas traje pan, carne, dulces, y los frutas. Un gato es feliz. Van todos en la casa felicemente.

Second Semester — Quality 4

En una casa mal viven un hombre y una mujer. Ellos no tuvieron dinero y no tuvieron una comida en la casa. En la mañana de Navidad, cuarto muy bueno niños u niñas pueden un basqueto grande en el patro que tiene una comida larga. El hombre y la mujer tuvieron un vez buena en la Navidad.

Fourth Semester — Quality 4. Semester Norm 4.3

Los viegos están muy contentos porque nadie les dió muchas cosas buenos para comer. El gata está mirando a las cosas bueno. Las muchachos llevaran las cosa para comer y para haur las viegas contentos. Entonies los muchados están muy contentos y están muy contentos y están mirando. A ellos para ver qué ellas hubieran.

Es una Navidad buena por los pobres en ésta pueblo.

Fourth Semester — Quality 5

En el campá donde vive un hombre y su espose que estan muy poor. Algunas muchachas y las nuchachas las trayeron muchas frutas a comer por Navidad. Ellas son mucho alegre y sopresa. Las muchachos y las muchachas se mira toman las frutas en la casa. El gato tiene mucha hombre tambien cuando lo vea la fruta.

El hombre y su esposa tiene un Navidad muy (alegre) felig y los muchachos tambien.

Sixth Semester — Quality 5. Semester Norm 5

Los abuelos estaban muy vieja y muy pobre. Vivian en una casa vieja y no tenia apenas comido vivir. Una manana de Navidad, estaban no comido en la casa y creédo que tuviesen (*starve*) si nongun ayudasen, porque no tenian dinero. En la tarde fueron en el patio y allé estaba comido. Bajo de las escaleros estaban cuatro muchacho, alegran de vé aquél abuelos tienen comido. Los muchachos habia dado la comida.

Eighth Semester — Quality 6. Semester Norm 5.9

Es la vispera de la navidad. Los ancianos han recibido un regalo de legumbres y frutas desde los ninos. Ellos, los ancianos aparecen muy alegría. El gato está viendo al regalo. Los ropas de los anciano son pobres y roto. Los niños se les habiár disimulado para acechar. Los niños se componían de dos muchachas y dos muchachos. Los niños aparecen a sir jubilo que les han hecho alegríá a los ancianos.

Attainment in Oral Ability. — The foregoing evidence in regard to attainment in reading and writing the foreign language is drawn entirely from the results of written tests. References have already been made to the desirability of evaluating in some way the ability to understand and to speak. The report of the Canadian Committee¹ supplies some interesting evidence that bears on this important point.

In the Protestant schools of Montreal much attention is paid to practice in hearing and in speaking French and the oral proficiency of the pupils is carefully graded by the teachers under the supervision of the inspector.

¹ *Modern Language Instruction in Canada*, Part II, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees on Modern Languages," Vol VI, pp. 837-846, University of Toronto Press, 1928.

With the aid of Mr. F. R. Robert, the supervisor of French in the Montreal schools, the Canadian Committee administered standardized tests in vocabulary, grammar, reading, and composition and a partly standardized audition test (cf. Henmon, *op. cit.* pp. 311-314) to 200 or more pupils each in Grades 8 to 11, and then studied the returns with relation to the oral grade given by the teachers. This experiment is discussed in detail in the Henmon report and attention is called to the difficulties in the way of any sweeping conclusions, but as the correlations between the various scores were positive and significant, the general drift of the evidence thus obtained is of genuine interest. We shall quote the appropriate passages without reproducing the tables.

"The correlations between composition, silent reading, and audition are high enough to indicate a very considerable relationship between these abilities, so great that there can be no doubt that training in any one of these abilities tested tends to cause growth in the other two. . . . Considering the limited range of these correlations . . . they are high and indicate a very positive relationship between the written tests and oral ability as represented by oral marks. If the oral marks given by the teachers are a reliable index of oral ability, then the written tests may be considered a valid, if indirect, measure of oral achievement. It will be noticed that, while the correlations vary greatly for the different teachers, with one exception grammar shows the highest correlation. Grammatical knowledge clearly is the most important factor in determining the oral mark. . . . The results of the present experiment prove that in a system such as that of the Montreal high schools, where the oral method is used exclusively, the new-type tests do measure oral-aural achievement indirectly. Considering the greater reliability of the written tests they are, from the standpoint of comparability, much superior to the oral mark. It is interesting to note that the correlations between the written tests and the oral marks are quite as high as the correlations between the written tests and teachers' marks in the rest of Canada or in the English system where the marks used were in no sense a measure of oral-aural achievement. This would lead one to believe that the written tests are quite as valid for the oral method as for any other. Furthermore it has been shown that the relation between oral and aural ability is high enough for an audition test to be considered a reasonably accurate measure of oral ability.

"Taking into account the known variability of teachers' marks it seems certain that a better and more comparable measure of oral-aural ability can be obtained by means of a battery of written tests, including an audition test, than by using an oral mark assigned by teachers."

The obvious inference from this evidence is that the oral-aural ability of the second-, third- and fourth-year modern language groups tested in the United States is very probably directly proportionate to their ability to read and write the foreign language, and that the preceding deductions in regard to linguistic achievement based on their performance in reading and writing would not be appreciably different if teachers' marks on oral attainment and if scores on an audition test were added to the data utilized in the present exposition.

Achievement in Two Years of Modern Language Study. — All the foregoing evidence — estimates by a considerable number of modern language teachers in secondary schools and the scores made by a large number of

students drawn from a wide territory geographically — combine to demonstrate that at least half the high school students completing two years of a modern language do not attain the power to read and to write with sufficient ease and rapidity to make it probable that they have reached or that they will reach the point of using these abilities for any purpose of their own. It is also highly probable that there is for the lower half of the group a direct ratio between the degree to which they attain reading and writing ability and the extent of their achievement of Objectives D to J, and N, concerning which, as we have seen, the judgments of secondary teachers are apparently so much more hopeful, and even more confident.

Many language teachers, particularly many Latinists, have at all times appeared to assume that the study of the language is in itself of considerable educative value to all persons regardless of the degree to which the language is learned. Later writers on the subject, however, take a different view. "The indispensable primary immediate objective in the study of Latin," says the report of the Classical Investigation (p. 32), "is progressive development of ability to read and understand Latin. Without this it is not to be expected that the ultimate objectives will be attained." Another way of phrasing the matter, especially for modern languages, would be to say that reading ability is both a primary and an ultimate objective. It is essential in order that the other objectives — first-hand contact with foreign peoples, acquiring a taste for the writings of foreign authors, becoming familiar with foreign word and phrase material in English, developing a clearer notion of what language is like, increasing one's capacity for learning additional languages, putting oneself in a position to make use promptly of foreign discoveries and inventions — may be realized, and in itself is the most useful "surrender" value of modern language study for after life. Consequently the very considerable numbers of those who cease study of the subject after two years without having attained this objective, have, in all probability, derived from their modern language work few benefits that could not have been secured, perhaps to a larger extent, from a direct study of one or more foreign civilizations, of language structure in general, and from considerable reading of foreign literature in translation.

Fortunately the non-attainment of the three instrumental objectives (reading, speaking, and writing) by at least as many as one-half of those who study a modern language for two years does not *ipso facto* compel us to abandon all three, despite the fact that the number of students who fall short of the mark is very large. If only one of the objectives is attainable and desirable, we must, before giving it up, consider under what circumstances it may be attained, and shape our conclusions accordingly. Conditions may call for a different course-content and method, or a longer time allowance, or for a different kind of pupil selection from that which generally prevails. These possibilities and others will be taken up at greater

length in the following chapter, but it must be borne in mind, as has already been suggested in the citation from the Buswell study (see p. 27 above), that the likelihood of the development of mature reading habits in the foreign language in two years by the majority of a given class, even under rather favorable conditions, is not as great as one would like to assume. The reasonable attitude for modern language teachers to take is to demand a certain degree of accomplishment by each student rather than the completion of a course of fixed length. Some students accomplish in two years what others barely achieve in three. Why should we not insist that we must have as a minimum the time allowance necessary for each student to attain a useful stage as expressed in terms of knowledge of the language? When this stage is reached, — be it ability to read or to write, or to speak, as seems educationally desirable and practicable, — and not until then, should the student be free to discontinue the subject or to attack it from a different angle.

Such a plan would, however, entail grave responsibilities. We should then be forced to measure in objective fashion the progress of our students in language abilities. We should be obliged to find out by experimentation what scores on an approved scale correspond to given degrees of power in the language. We would find our situation far less comfortable than today, when we teach as best we know how, and leave it to future contingencies to disclose the extent and kind of linguistic abilities that our students have developed. The establishment of a standard of attainment for them would necessarily establish one for teachers also; we would be compelled to measure more accurately the results of our teaching and thus to keep check on the fruits of our own efforts. Nevertheless, when thus fortified by more systematic observation and by accurate records of student performance, we would be in a position to present to school authorities the claims of our subject in far more compelling fashion than we can now do. Being thus armed with tangible arguments, we would quite certainly be heard with more respect.

Attention has been called above to the relative numbers of "votes" cast by the secondary teachers consulted with respect to the validity and the percentage of attainment by their students of the several objectives tentatively proposed by the Study Committee. While it must be insisted that the figures given in this connection are only suggestive, both because they represent opinion and because the relative numbers do not correspond in each case to clearly stated issues, still they are indicative of teacher opinion. Keeping this in mind, we may assume that those who affirmed the validity of various objectives for first and second year would all the more assert their validity for the more advanced years, which relatively brings up the totals in the case of the three- and the four-year groups, and tends to put more nearly on a parity the votes for Objectives A, B,

and C. It appears reasonable to conclude that there is a greater relative probability, in the judgment of teachers, of the validity and of a high percentage of attainment of these objectives in courses of a minimum length of three years than in a period of two years. However, since in the questionnaire no account was taken of the possible effect of greater selection of pupils by the time the third year is reached, we can not say whether, in the opinion of those consulted, the relative advantage of the longer course is due purely to the fact that it is longer, or in part to the fact that a considerable selective influence has been at work, with eliminating effects.

While admitting the difficulty of establishing that the ability of third- and fourth-year students to answer correctly the questions that have been reproduced gives clear evidence of ability to read and to write the modern language within the limits of the objectives as formulated, we submit that the testimony denotes an appreciably higher level of performance than was exhibited by the two-year group. One might justifiably maintain, however, that such a level should be attained by a considerable majority of a given group before we can be confident that the reading and the writing objectives have been achieved by the majority of students.¹ While teachers frequently discover, when their judgment is tested by student response, that they are mistaken in their estimate of the relative difficulty of different passages in the foreign language, as also of the relative difficulty of questions on grammar, we all have a certain sense for such things. At least we know what grammatical points are emphasized at given stages, what we expect of our own students, and the general character of the reading matter that we consider appropriate at the various stages of the course. The foregoing data in regard to the character of the tests and the scores attained on them at the second,- third- and fourth-year levels were given in order to lay before members of the profession concrete specimens of the evidence derived from the Committee's testing program and thus to enable them to judge whether the conclusions to which the data point are well founded with respect to the evidence now available.

We may conclude, then, that the outcome of the two-year course, *as at present organized and conducted*, does not justify us in claiming for it the validity of the reading, speaking, and writing objectives for the lower half of the group, and that the case is none too clear for the attainment of these objectives by the lower half of the class in third year, unless it can be established experimentally that these abilities begin to function more effectively than we have assumed, at a lower score level on the measuring instruments that have been used.

¹ A good deal of interesting evidence on the intercorrelations of the scores made on the different units of the American Council Alpha tests is provided by Henmon, *op. cit.*, Chapter V, but this will be considered in Chapter II of the present discussion.

The indirect objectives. — In regard to the objectives that are less obviously dependent on specific classroom performance (D to P), little definite evidence is available.¹ It appears quite improbable that any will be forthcoming soon on the extent to which the following objectives are or can be attained to a relatively superior degree through the study of modern languages: I (increased ability to understand ideals, standards, and traditions of foreign peoples and of Americans of foreign birth), J (development of literary and artistic appreciation), K (development of a more adequate realization of the relation of the individual to society), M (increased ability to discern relationships and to make comparisons between subjects allied in form and content), N (development of habits of sustained effort), P (development of social adaptability through increased personal contacts with natives of other countries). For the purposes of this discussion, which should be essentially practical in nature, these may be left out of consideration, except to say that they are highly desirable results educationally, and that modern language instruction, if it aids in attaining them, is to that extent more commendable.²

Logically, however, there is much to support such a claim in the case of Objective I, which is a variant of the "cultural" objective (H), and of J, provided the course really brings students in close and appreciative contact with foreign literature, and of P. There is assuredly nothing extravagant in the argument that modern language study, properly guided and carried to the point of attainment of the reading objective, is capable of contributing its full measure to the development of literary appreciation, and that, more directly and specifically than any other study, it brings to the attention of students the ideals, standards and traditions of other peoples. Literary appreciation can be and is cultivated, of course, in English courses. The ideas and aspirations and efforts of other peoples form the subject matter of history when it is properly studied and interpreted. The modern language course is, in these respects, not the only road to salvation, but it is one of the several roads that may be followed with most confidence when conditions are auspicious.

¹ The term "indirect objective" is used for want of a better one to designate the aims with which classroom exercises are not directly concerned. It is particularly applicable to Objectives I, J, K, M, P (cf. *supra*, p. 16), which depend chiefly for their attainment on the amount and kind of transfer.

² C. H. Judd's summary of this question (*Psychology of Secondary Education*, Chap. XIX) may be accepted as representing the current scientific view, especially three sentences on pp. 422-423: "No subject of instruction guarantees mental training. Anyone who asserts that mathematics or Latin or science is a mind trainer makes a superficial statement which is not in keeping with experience nor defensible in theory. These subjects may, if properly treated, be very useful in training the highest intellectual powers, but they cannot guarantee that fortunate result."

The same writer remarks in another connection: "The real problem of transfer is a problem of so organizing the method of training that it will carry over in the minds of the students to other fields." *The Reorganization of Mathematics in Secondary Education*, p. 99. See for a valuable summary on this point the *General Report of the Classical Investigation*, Part I, pp. 55-58.

Improvement in English through Study of the Modern Languages. — The first of the other objectives on the list already given is Objective D: Increased ability to pronounce and understand foreign words and phrases occurring in English. It is evident that a person who knows French and German and Italian can have few difficulties with foreign expressions occurring in English, since most of them come from these three sources, particularly from the French. Certain questions naturally arise in this connection: Are such expressions numerous enough to add any weight to arguments in favor of modern language study? Is there any evidence in regard to the importance of the different languages from this point of view, for few of our students will learn all three? We must, however, in all candor record the belief that the attainment of this objective would not in itself be a sufficient reason for the study of modern languages. At most it can have only cumulative value, and the skilled teacher can with a little trouble and ingenuity make sure of its attainment by a high percentage of his students.

The next objective on the list is phrased thus: Increased ability in the accurate and intelligent use of English. It may be assumed that a liberal interpretation is in order here; that modern language study is considered of value because it tends to increase range and accuracy of English vocabulary, to bring out sharply, particularly by contrast, the force of the appropriate English idiom or other expression, to focus attention on the rôle of grammar as a sort of chart or guide of speechways, making the student speech-conscious as study of the mother tongue rarely succeeds in doing, and to promote greater care in spelling and in other mechanical aspects of writing. Such are the claims that have usually been advanced regarding the effect of the study of the classical and of the modern languages. The outcome of several inquiries into the factual basis of such claims for the study of Latin is briefly indicated in the report of the Classical Investigation (pp. 42-51). The results, which vary greatly from school to school, indicate that Latin students gain relatively more than non-Latin in their use of English words derived from the Latin, that 46 per cent of the written translations collected from a large number of fourth-semester students were unacceptable as English,¹ that Latin students gain relatively more in the spelling of Latin derivatives than non-Latin groups, as also in ability to use the grammatically correct English form and to state the governing principle, and in relative ability to read English. In each case there were marked fluctuations in the returns, fluctuations from a gain of zero to a marked amount, and a very close relationship appeared to exist between course-content and method on the one hand, and gain in English on the other. In other words, the improvement that had been posited seemed to be only to a very small extent automatic, if at all.

¹ Cf. Miller-Briggs, "Effect of Latin Translation on English," *School Review*, XXXI (1923), 756-762.

The Werner Experiment. — An investigation by O. H. Werner of the University of Nebraska¹ of the improvement in English by a limited number of high school and of college students yielded the following results: (a) Modern language groups made a greater relative gain in ability to read rapidly and comprehendingly than non-modern language students. (b) Their ability to punctuate shows a loss. (c) They make no relative gain in recognizing faulty English sentences. (d) The high school modern language group showed a greater relative gain in English grammar; the college group (267 foreign language to 69 non-foreign language) did not. Three high school modern language students did not show a greater relative gain in English vocabulary, while the college foreign language group did. Professor Werner was not satisfied with the test by the aid of which this last conclusion was reached. He further observed that modern language students with mental ability above the average are relatively more likely to show favorable progress in English than those in the lower group; the lower the I. Q., the less likelihood of gain in English by modern language students.

The effect on pupils' English of translation from foreign languages. — The practice of translating from ancient or from modern languages into English as it now prevails in our classrooms does not appear to have any beneficial effects on improving standards of expression in the mother tongue.² All the evidence adduced on this point by the Classical report (*Classical Investigation*, pp. 47-48) tends to confirm the impression that the quality of translation English presented in classroom exercises and in examination papers by Latin students is too low to support a claim of benefit to English composition from this source. A study of translations from French³ testifies to a similar effect in the modern language field, testimony which will not surprise the teachers who have considered at all critically the kind of English that efforts at translation usually produce. In fact it is often distressingly true that such standards of "translation English" appear to carry over in many cases with would-be modern language experts who render foreign literary production into English. Russian authors have perhaps suffered most at the hands of such "traditori," but the lax standards of English expression permitted in foreign language classrooms must probably bear some share of the responsibility. At the same time, it is well known that American publishing houses take but little responsibility with respect to the quality of the translations that they

¹ See Oscar H. Werner, "The Influence of the Study of the Modern Foreign Languages on the Development of Abilities in English," *Modern Language Journal*, XII (Jan. 1928), 241-260.

² The contribution of practice in translating from the foreign language to the development of ability to read the foreign language is a wholly different matter, on which the Committee has no evidence. Judd (*op. cit.*, pp. 232-236) summarizes evidence from which it appears that continuous training in getting the thought from the foreign tongue through the process of translation tends strongly to develop habits that interfere with reading as properly understood.

³ Price-Thompson-Richards, *School and Society*, XXIII, 41-56.

accept.¹ It is, of course, quite easy to account for the poor quality of the English that students offer. Their effort is to "get the sense" and to do it quickly. They are usually sufficiently skilled neither in the foreign tongue nor in the vernacular to be very exacting of themselves, and teachers who consider that translation is the best, and really the only way to test comprehension of the text, are more intent on keeping a check on the fidelity of their students in studying their lessons than on securing adequate renderings into English. Thus translation becomes a testing device rather than an exercise in expressing adequately in the vernacular the thought of a paragraph or a page in the foreign tongue, and the student is usually unaware that anything is involved beyond providing evidence that he has prepared his lesson.

Despite the inquiries that have been made, we are hardly yet in a position to state categorically that the various gains in English that have been observed in the case of foreign language students could not be made by non-foreign language students of equal calibre if their work in English, in history and in science was carefully planned with this in mind. The fact brought out by the classical investigators, that these gains were greatly increased in Latin classes in which the desire to attain this objective was reflected in the content and the method, and shrank to very small dimensions in others, points in this direction and may contain a very practical moral for the curriculum of the non-foreign language group. As things are now, it is in the foreign language courses that most attention is paid to such matters, and the failure to show progress as generally and in as many respects as a logical analysis would lead one to expect is, in large part at least, to be attributed to bad judgment in choosing what is taught and the way in which to teach it. A good deal of skepticism in this connection is what we need now, rather than a too comfortable confidence. Modern language teachers are in daily contact with students whose letter-perfect knowledge of grammar "rules" seems to affect but little the way in which they write or speak, and the greater influence on speech in the vernacular of the habits of one's environment as contrasted with the effect of study of English grammar is a matter of common knowledge.

The Woody-Hootkins-Carr Experiment. — An inquiry under the direction of Professor Clifford Woody of the University of Michigan had as its purpose to ascertain whether pupils in French increased their knowledge of English words derived from the French more rapidly than other groups of pupils.² Mr. H. Hootkins of Michigan, with the aid of Professors W. L.

¹ See Ernest Bernbaum's discussion of several numbers in the *Broadway Translations* series. *Modern Language Notes*, XLII (May, 1927), 283-285.

² "The Influence of the Teaching of First Year French on the Acquisition of English Vocabulary." *Studies in Modern Language Teaching*. "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," Vol. XVII. The Macmillan Co., 1929.

Carr and Clifford Woody, devised and standardized two forms of an English vocabulary test of 50 words each, equally divided between French and non-French derivatives. The technique followed was that of the Carr English Vocabulary test used in the Classical Investigation. The words were chosen on the basis of the Henmon French Word list and the Thorndike Teachers' Word Book. Form 1 of the tests was administered in the autumn in ten Michigan cities and Form 2 to the same pupils the following June. Three chief groups with no previous foreign language study were tested: "No Language," "Beginning French," "Beginning Latin." In the autumn and in June scores were secured from the following numbers in the above order: 417, 298, 303, and the mean gains made during the year in understanding the meanings of the French derivatives were calculated. The quite surprising result is that the mean increase in understanding of both the French and the non-French derivatives in the two forms of the test by the particular pupils tested was, when undifferentiated for intelligence, sex, and initial scores, greatest in the "No Language" group, next greatest in the "Beginning Latin" group, and least in the "Beginning French" group.

After a careful statistical analysis of the ratios of the results obtained, the conclusions reached are thus expressed:

"Consideration of these ratios indicates a certain superiority of the 'No Language' group over the 'Beginning French' group, and over all groups. . . . The 'Beginning Latin' group represents probable superiority over the 'Beginning French' group and over all the supplementary groups. The difference in the means for the 'Beginning Spanish' and 'Beginning French' groups are insignificant. The 'Beginning French' group is superior to the 'Beginning French with Latin Previously' group in the French derivatives, but not on the non-French derivatives. The 'Third Semester Latin' group shows possible superiority over the 'Beginning French' group on the non-French derivatives but not on the French derivatives. . . ."

A further analysis yields no evidence of distinct differences of gains according to sex, and since the mean intelligence quotient of the "No Language" group was lower than for the others, this factor did not favor the "No Language" group. The final rank in order of gains was "Beginning Latin," "No Language," "Beginning French."

It is difficult to account for the apparently paradoxical nature of these results. It may be that the "No Language" group did relatively more work in English than the others — reading, word-study, composition writing — and thus made greater gains in knowledge of English vocabulary.¹ It may be that the very strong tendency of teachers of French to shun the use of English in class reduces sharply the possibility of attention to cognates and word meanings in English. It may be that Latin teachers are now laying especial stress on such exercises as a result of the findings

¹ "The Increasing of English Vocabulary in the English Class," Symonds and Penny. *Journal of Educational Research*, XV, 93-103.

of the Classical Investigation. It may be that all three of these factors contribute to the situation in this group of schools as revealed by this investigation. Be that as it may, and making all due allowance for the fact that inquiry in this field has not yet gone far enough to produce definitive results, the modern language teacher is forced to conclude that almost every investigation of the character and amount of the by-products of his teaching effort forces him to regard with increased suspicion many claims that he has confidently made in the past, that probably the only way to secure a given result is to adapt his teaching to that end, and that only by much greater attention to measuring more exactly the products of his teaching can he ever expect to ascertain to what goal his efforts usually lead.

We may fairly conclude, therefore, with the considerable number of teachers who voted on improvement in knowledge of English as an objective, that it is desirable and attainable, but that our claims on this score may well be more modestly stated and that modern language teaching will certainly not yield its full quota of profit in this regard if we are content to record the objective on our list and to consider the attainment of it as an automatic by-product of modern language study. If improvement in the knowledge of English is a desirable and valid objective for modern language classes, means must be devised by which this aim may be realized and some account must be kept of progress in the right direction or both teacher and pupils will be working in the dark.

Effect of study of a modern language on progress in other languages. — Objective F. Increased power to learn other languages.

All experience and some investigation tend to confirm the validity of this objective, which does not mean that students who have shown their incapacity to learn one language will all the more easily learn another. It is probably one of the very few of the objectives that have been proposed that may be achieved merely by the effort expended in learning the language being studied. The Latin investigation presents some facts to show a slight beneficial effect on progress in French of previous Latin study (*op. cit.*, pp. 53-54), which becomes more marked when, as in the study of Romance languages, teachers take advantage of the common elements in order to increase the amount of transfer. Whatever may be the theoretical justification — or lack of it — for studying the question from this point of view, rather than from the standpoint of the more natural sequence, which would put a modern language first, the situation has its practical bearings, for Latin is ordinarily begun before a modern language. In fact it is the practice in many schools to allow registration in modern languages only to those who have had at least a year of Latin.

In contrast with the findings of the inquiries referred to by the Classical Committee, we must mention the statement of Starch:¹ "The aid of one

¹ *School Review*, XXIII (1915), 697-703.

language in studying another is only incidental and unimportant, at least so far as present methods of teaching foreign languages go," but this conclusion is so at variance with the experience of all who have studied a second or a third language, especially of a closely connected linguistic stock, that it cannot be accepted literally, unless the author meant to say that the study of a second language is aided by previous linguistic experience only if that experience has resulted in *learning* the first language. In other words, the question of degree of effect is in this case quite as important as the question of kind, and if the degree of improvement in capacity to learn a second language is in proportion only to success in learning the first, we must admit that gain in this must be very often insignificant.

The Rice Experiment. — Some quite pertinent evidence on this point is provided by Professor George A. Rice of the University of California in study made during the years 1925–1927.¹ In this, among other questions, he sought an answer to the question whether the learning of one foreign language progresses more or less favorably in the case of those who have already studied another. The scores of 1117 high school students on the Iowa Placement Tests, who were taking French or Spanish as a second foreign language, were checked against the scores of 1598 students who were taking their first foreign language, with a small but decided advantage in favor of the former group. These results were corroborated by the records of 1027 additional pupils taking a second language with scores well above the group medians. A further conclusion reached by Professor Rice is that the beneficial effects upon progress in a second foreign language vary directly with the length of time during which the first language was studied. The median score in a second language of a random group which had discontinued the first foreign language after a semester fell below the group median.

Professor Rice enumerates thus his conclusions:

1. The study of one foreign language does help considerably in the acquisition of a second foreign language.
2. Within the limits of the seven years of secondary education, the longer one studies one foreign language, the surer of success in the second language he will be.
3. Previous study of Latin did not prove more advantageous than previous study of Spanish for success in French.
4. The transfer of ability in one language to the second language . . . is slightly greater in the first year of study than in the later years.
5. The influence of previous language study was positive and considerable throughout the period of study of the second language.
6. A foreign language studied only one year possesses very little transfer value in the acquisition of a second foreign language.

This experimental evidence tends to corroborate the widespread and reasonable belief that a second language is learned more readily than the

¹ Cf. *Studies in Modern Language Teaching*, "Publications of American and Canadian Committees," Vol. XVII.

first,¹ but throws doubt upon the frequently made statement that previous study of Latin is more effective an aid in the learning of a modern language than is another modern language.

Objective G. A more effective realization of the importance of habits of correct articulation and clear enunciation. No experimental evidence is available in regard to this objective, but we all know professors of modern languages who articulate poorly both in the foreign language and in the vernacular, who have not the gift of tongues, although they may be authorities on the history and structure of the foreign language. We have no way of knowing how much their general speech habits would have been improved if they had received careful phonetic training in the modern language. As almost nowhere in the field of English studies is any attention paid to phonetic training in the vernacular, such guidance is available only in the modern language classroom. The probability is that improvement in this respect is in direct proportion to the amount and kind of effort expended by the teacher and the students on the elimination of individual defects. The primary responsibility for correctly analyzing speech situations and for applying remedial exercises rests, therefore, on the teacher.

TWO CULTURAL OBJECTIVES

Objective H. Increased knowledge of the history and institutions of the foreign country and a better understanding of its contribution to modern civilization.

This objective, although it may be expressed in various ways, figures prominently in all discussions of teaching foreign language. "An improved understanding of foreign peoples and a sympathetic attitude toward them"; "an attitude of greater respect by Americans toward the speech of other nations"; "cultural values, for the language and literature of a country represent the people better than any one aspect of their civilization"; "some reduction in one's degree of provinciality, some increase of cosmopolitan spirit and attitude" — these are a few of the different ways of expressing the same general idea. As we saw above, a relatively large number of teachers (244, or 56 per cent of those voting) expressed their belief that this objective is attained by at least 50 per cent of their students by the end of the second year. We have no other testimony on this point, but this statement, if approximately correct, is extremely important in view of the prevalent length of the course in modern languages.

Through what means may this aim be realized? Through the kind and extent of the reading matter of the course, through the information

¹ See for additional confirmatory evidence the article by F. D. Cheydeur in the *Modern Language Journal*, XII, 513-531: "Results and Significance of the New Type of Modern Language Tests," and especially pp. 526-528.

and comment that comes from the teacher, and through the interest aroused by the course which leads the student to learn about the foreign country in other ways. The texts read must be informing and illustrative of the foreign country, must suggest to students the kind of ideals, qualities and characteristics that best represent the people and are of interest to the student reader. Reading matter that is primarily informative or moral or didactic or too remote from the habits of mind of students will fail of its purpose, and the use for "conversational" purposes of *realia* that are entirely external — coins, models of grocery stores and railway stations, and the like — can probably contribute to the objective only to the degree that they serve to stimulate interest in the foreign people and to hold attention.

The amount of reading matter is almost or quite as important as the kind. The median number of pages read in first year high school French, as reported by 190 teachers is 96–100, in second year (230 teachers) 195–200 plus 76–80 (138 teachers). Corresponding figures for Spanish are: first year (116 teachers), 76–80 pages, and second year (137 teachers), 136–140 pages plus (57 teachers) 86–90 pages; for German: (81 teachers) first year, 56–60 pages; second year (37 teachers), 186–190 pages. According to these statements, which are certainly representative in number and in geographic distribution, students completing second year French will have read at most about 375 pages; those completing second year Spanish will have read about 300 pages; while the German group will have read 250 pages. These figures are in essential agreement with those obtained from other sources, such as the examination of a large number of course outlines and the data given in Van Horne's articles.¹ The course-outlines of twelve states (see above, p. 8) give an average of 115 pages for first year French and those of fifteen states indicate 300 pages for second; the corresponding figures for Spanish are 100 pages and 200 pages; for German, 80 pages and 180 pages. The question is whether such an amount of reading would usually provide the necessary "cultural" material.

As the answer to this question depends in part on the nature of the texts usually read, an examination of these was undertaken² from this point of view. The findings of these three studies are in accord that there is in the prevailing reading course very little material bearing explicitly on the foreign country and its civilization. It is easy in the case of almost any text to make up a considerable list of categories or subject headings

¹ *Modern Language Journal*, III, 143–157, 218–230; VIII (1924), 215–220, 261–265, 363–368, 399–403. The last two articles deal with reading in secondary schools. About half of the schools reporting read a somewhat larger number of pages of French than is reported above.

² Gertrude M. Gilman, "Cultural Material in the French Reading Texts Used in Illinois High Schools," an M.A. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1927; Harry and Grace Kurz, "Cultural Material in the French Texts Read in Colleges," 1927; John and Margaret Van Horne, "Cultural Materials in Spanish Reading Texts at the Junior College Level," 1927. *Studies in Modern Language Teaching*, "Publications of American and Canadian Committees," Vol. XVII.

under which to classify the various items that are encountered, but when we scrutinize in a given text the items that fall under *history*, *government*, *customs*, and the like, it is surprising to note how meager they usually are, in themselves, and how little light they throw on life in France or in Spain.¹ In order to fill out the picture, to supply the information needed to make allusions comprehensible, the notes and the instructor must do a large share. If they do not, there is little likelihood that Objective H will be attained as the result of the modern language course. The definite evidence to this effect that is now available is of obvious importance in its bearing on the curriculum and on the training of teachers. More explicit provision must be made for realizing this aim when determining the content of the course, and teachers who fail to equip themselves to discharge the responsibility that is so evidently theirs must cross off this objective from their list. No tests have been devised to sample achievement in this direction, but we now see that this would be no impossible task and might yield valuable data. However, we should probably not have to modify greatly the judgment that, in the two-year course at least, Objective H can be satisfactorily achieved only if a deliberate attempt be made to do so, and if course-content and method and teacher-equipment harmonize to that end. While the range of reading in third year shows a distinct increase in amount and in kind (French, 255 pages of fiction in class — 170 teachers; 200 pages supplementary — 96 teachers; 95 pages of drama — 93 teachers; definitely smaller amounts in German and in Spanish), it is not sufficiently great to relieve school authorities and teachers from their specific responsibility in respect to this objective, which is generally admitted to be one of the most significant of the modern language course.

Objective L. A clearer understanding of the history and nature of language.

A relatively considerable number of teachers replying to the questionnaire voted for the validity of this objective in a three-year course, but there was apparently a good deal of hesitation in indicating the degree of attainment at any special point in the course. Forty-eight Spanish teachers (about one-third of those voting on this point) expressed the opinion that it was attained by at least 50 per cent of their second year students, whereas 58 (about one-half) estimated a similar degree of attainment in third year. The proportion of French teachers expressing themselves to the same intent was somewhat smaller: about one-fourth of those voting estimating attainment by 50 per cent at least for second year, and one-third for the third year course. It may be surmised that teachers wondered just what were the implications of the objective as it was expressed, and were puzzled to know what elements of their course would contribute to its attainment.

¹ See *infra*, p. 120.

It has been pointed out by several writers on the subject¹ that the foreign language course in high school is almost the only medium through which students may have their attention called to the structure and development of their own and of other languages (origin, development of word order and vocabulary, connection with historical events, relation to the civilizations by which it has been molded), and so may come to have a better understanding of the growth of languages in general, just as efforts are now made in other fields to bring before our students various aspects of the struggle of man upward from a more primitive state. In response to this theory, and to the further argument that each year of the school work in a subject should have a "surrender" value in addition to cumulative values that may be collected only later, "general language" courses have been introduced in a number of schools, particularly at the elementary or junior high school level.² It is intended in some instances that these courses shall serve for general orientation to the students who will not take a foreign language, and, in addition, as "exploratory" of tastes and capacities for those who do.³ In other schools work of this kind has been incorporated in the modern language course and is carried throughout as a definite part of the instruction.⁴ No definite evidence is yet available to inform us whether such courses have proved to be relatively more stimulating and broadening in their effect than those in which the language being studied keeps the center of the stage, or whether the outlines suggested have been successfully utilized by a considerable number of teachers in the systems where they have been proposed.

It is certainly not unreasonable to ask of the foreign language course, whether ancient or modern, that it perform some such rôle as that implied in the formulation of this objective, a rôle which in the past it has not often explicitly undertaken to play. The arguments advanced by Inglis that Latin, because of its inflections and its tightly woven structure, is most useful to English speaking students for developing a realization of the structure of language,⁵ and by others that among the modern languages German has the highest value in this respect, are of considerable interest, but have so far, as in the case of most such arguments *pro* and *con*, only an *a priori* value. One might, for example, argue with equal force that Latin should be followed — or preceded — by German because of closer

¹ E.g., Judd, *Psychology of High School Subjects*, pp. 220-221 (Ginn, 1915); Inglis, *Principles of Secondary Education*, Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1918, Chapter XIII.

² Of 544 teachers replying to the question on this point, 64 state that they had had pupils with experience in such a course, but the testimony in regard to the effects of this type of instruction is conflicting. Cf. Judd, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

³ Cf. C. O. Davis, *Junior High School Education*, pp. 163-166, 326.

⁴ Cf. the *Denver Course of Study Monographs* for French and for Junior High School Spanish. The Public Schools of Denver, Colorado, 1925. See also the Junior High School Committee Report in the *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, p. 296.

⁵ Cf. C. O. Davis (*op. cit.*, p. 167) for a similar position with respect to foreign language in the junior high school.

parallelisms between the two languages flectionally, or by one of the Romance languages because of the close connection between them etymologically. A fair statement of the case is, perhaps, that we have too little evidence regarding the validity and the degree of achievement of this objective¹ to say more than that it is a highly desirable one which, in all likelihood, will not be realized in the study of any language unless a desire on the part of the teacher to attain this aim is reinforced by properly chosen and well organized material presented as an integral part of the language course by instructors who are aware of what they are doing, who have their hearts in the task, and who are able to see the city as well as the houses.

A REVISED LIST OF OBJECTIVES

When confronted by the task of formulating for modern language instruction a list of objectives that conform to the criteria proposed by the numerous writers on the subject as modified by the results of our inquiries, we are sorely embarrassed. The fundamental objectives of education as formulated by the N. E. A. Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education are, as is well known: health, command of fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure, ethical character.² We may accept this statement as in general sound without assuming the responsibility of endorsing the form in which it is expressed or of passing upon the worthiness of various ways of spending one's leisure time. With matters of health, command of fundamental processes (i.e. ability to speak, read, write in the vernacular and to cipher) and of home membership, modern language study has in general but little demonstrable connection. It has, for most people, a limited vocational value; it is, or may be, directly connected with civic education in the larger sense; it may be made to play a considerable rôle in using our leisure time profitably and agreeably and, through the contacts that modern languages render possible with the various aspects of another civilization than our own, and the consequent widening of experience, it may be fruitful for character building as well.

To the statement that access to a very considerable part of the literary, scientific, and artistic treasures of other nations may be had through translation, we can only cheerfully and gladly assent. The enormous dissemination of literature and of ideas and of information through translation, and the importance of this process for the history of all the great cultures, are facts too well established to need discussion. It is startling to speculate on what would have been the course of events in almost any notable sphere of human activity if no translations had been made and if interchange of thought had been limited only to those who read a work in

¹ Cf. *Classical Investigation*, Part I, pp. 71-72.

² See *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*, Bureau of Education Bulletin No. 35, 1918, p. 14.

the original text. It may very well be that the flavor of the original can often not be recaptured by those who do not read a work in the language of the author, but would the Greek dramatists and Shakespeare have wielded the influence that they possess, would the Bible have affected so profoundly a large part of the world, would the fiction of England and of France and of Russia, would the drama and the fiction of Scandinavia — to limit ourselves to only a very few and very obvious examples — have so greatly influenced the course of literary developments and the directions taken by human thought and human feelings if the despised translator had not rendered them accessible to a vast public that otherwise would not have known them? The case is so clear that argument is superfluous. Many translations are bad and have entirely misrepresented the originals, sometimes deliberately or because of mistaken or distorted judgments (*teste* the earlier French translations of Shakespeare), sometimes because of ignorance of the language of the original, and sometimes, alas, because of ignorance of the vernacular, but the rôle of the good translation has been and will continue to be highly commendable. It is far better to know Homer through Andrew Lang's version, or the Greek dramatists with Murray's aid, or Plato with the help of Jowett than merely to thumb them out *à coups de dictionnaire*, or not to know them at all.

In the modern field, however, literature and the sciences are in the making and the translator pants hopelessly in the rear. It is true that many of the best books and articles are promptly translated; it is also true that many very important things are not. Furthermore, we need to have access to hundreds of books and articles, and not merely to the few lonely masterpieces; we need to keep our finger on the pulse of our generation in its commonplace daily beating as well as when it throbs vigorously. This argument is applicable, to be sure, to only a limited number of persons, to those who by their capacities and their interests are likely to use their command of one or more foreign languages for such ranging or, conversely, whose language knowledge may suggest to them such pleasant ways in which to venture. It also may be asked whether those who have tasted of a language are not the most apt to seek its literature in translation. In fact it is as fallacious to assume that we must provide opportunities for the study of modern languages to the individual only when tastes have developed and situations have arisen that demand it, as to contend that all high school students should take a modern language because the need for such knowledge may one day arise. Can we do more than estimate as best we may the tastes, the capacities, the probable life career of the individual and the likelihood of his success in learning a particular subject?¹

¹ Cf. T. H. Briggs, *Curriculum Problems*, p. 46. Cf. also the citation in C. H. Judd in *Third Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, p. 382: "The modern school assumes that the pupil is to be introduced to all of the intellectual arts and to all the practical skills which he is fitted by natural ability to take on. The goal of education is thus set in terms of a complete and broad education."

It has been said¹ that in order to realize contemporary secondary objectives at least five groups of subjects are necessary to cover the major modes of thought and activities involved in the experiences of adolescents: "1. The linguistic, including elementary aspects of foreign languages, but predominantly the mother tongue. 2. History and other social studies. 3. Natural sciences and elementary mathematics. 4. Practical arts. 5. Music and other fine arts." Another curriculum analyst enumerates thus the elements of a general education:² English, citizenship, literature (English and general), science, common mathematics, physical training and hygiene, appreciation of music and of art, and adds: "Capable and industrious and ambitious students should be permitted to widen their general training program through the taking of certain extras, such as the following: Foreign languages, advanced mathematics, history of English literature, technical music . . . and many others." This writer is definitely of the opinion that only students who belong to the high ability group or who have special aptitudes or ambitions should be enrolled for these "extras," but he also holds that all students capable of following such studies successfully should be informed of their merits and should be encouraged to include them in their school programs in accordance with their special tastes (pp. 69-71 *passim*) and, we may suppose he would add, with the opportunities offered in their schools. When he comes to consider specifically the part of foreign languages in the high school curriculum, he adds: "There is some evidence that the alien languages have a considerable rôle to play in a well-conducted American life" (p. 259), and observes quite prudently in this same connection: "Education should proceed upon the basis of the probabilities until scientific investigations have shown us the verities" (p. 260).

The opinion which underlies the statements cited, that only a limited number of the secondary school students of the country should study foreign languages, appears to find an echo in the statements of modern language teachers concerning some of the reasons why the outcome of their efforts is unsatisfactory. When asked to indicate which of a number of possible factors tended to affect unfavorably achievement in their classes, 486 of the 580 secondary teachers replying, or 84 per cent, agreed that one of these is the lack of linguistic capacity on the part of too many students. The two other causes finding favor with the next largest groups were "too many non-academic activities," 388 votes (67 per cent), and "improper classification of students," 338 votes (58 per cent), with "crowded classes" fourth, 190 votes (33 per cent). To any one accustomed to hearing teachers inveigh against the extent to which "activities" hamper school work, and against the overlarge classes that they are required to teach, the high

¹ J. A. Clement, *Principles and Practices of Secondary School Education*. Century Co., 1925, p. 358.

² Bobbitt, *How to Make a Curriculum*, p. 69.

degree of importance that their vote gives to the poor quality of students as a chief factor in their failure to attain their objectives assumes very real significance. It appears that too many of the wrong boys and girls are electing modern languages, and while the time has not yet come when we can predict with confidence that a given student will fail or succeed primarily because of lacking or of having linguistic capacity, school administrators and modern language teachers can do far more to improve the situation than is now being done.

Despite the lack of definite evidence on many important points that have been touched upon in this discussion, we may, in the light of the foregoing, regard it as established that a revision of the list of ultimate objectives first proposed by the Committee on Investigation, together with the immediate objectives implied therein, is clearly necessary in order that we may "proceed upon the basis of the probabilities." The following statement of aims is, therefore, meant to represent more nearly the realities of the situation as they now appear. Only a limited number of facts are available to support the list as it will be given. The element of hope, so prominent in most lists of objectives drawn up by teachers of subjects, is not entirely banished, and the need for experimental testing of the validity of the new list is no less great than in the case of the old. It is also evident that certain ideals and, no doubt, certain traditional judgments of what an individual needs for thinking and feeling in a mature way are not without influence in what follows. Discussion of the ways in which these objectives are to be realized through the modern language activities of the student belongs clearly to another connection.¹

Objectives of the First Two Years

Immediate Objectives

Progressive Development:

1. Of the ability to read books, newspapers, and magazines in the modern language within the scope of the student's interests and intellectual powers.
2. Of such knowledge of the grammar of the language as is demonstrated to be necessary for reading with comprehension.
3. Of the ability to pronounce correctly, to understand and to use the language orally within the limits of class materials.
4. Of a knowledge of the foreign country, past and present, and of a special interest in the life and characteristics of its people.
5. Of increased knowledge of the derivations and meanings of English words, of the principles and leading facts of English grammar and of the relationships between the foreign language and English.

Ultimate Objectives

1. Ability to read the foreign language with moderate ease and with enjoyment for recreative and for vocational purposes.

¹ Compare for a recent statement the report of the Sub-Committee on French to the Committee on Standards for use in the Reorganization of Secondary School Curricula, *North Central Association Quarterly*, I (1927), 467-482.

2. Ability to use orally and in intelligible fashion a small stock of the foreign words, phrases and sentences.
3. An especial interest in the history, the institutions and the ideals of the foreign country, a better understanding of its contribution to civilization and a less provincial attitude toward the merits and achievements of other peoples.
4. Increased curiosity about the literature and the art of other nations and greater ability to understand and enjoy them.
5. Greater interest in the accurate use of English.
6. Increased understanding of the development and the structure of the mother tongue and of other languages.

Objectives of Third and Fourth Year

Immediate Objectives

1. Further development of speed and of range of silent reading ability to a point more closely approximating attainment in the vernacular.
2. Development of an increased functional knowledge of the forms and of the syntax of the foreign language, with speaking and writing more definitely in mind as ends in themselves.
3. Increased development of the ability to pronounce, to understand, and to use the language orally.
4. Development of a larger active stock of vocabulary and idiom for use in writing and speaking.
5. An increased knowledge of the foreign country and its people and their achievements in various fields of activity.
6. A more mature knowledge of the history of the foreign language and of its various relationships with English in word meanings, in derivations and in grammar.

Ultimate Objectives

1. Ability to read the foreign language with considerable ease and with enjoyment for recreative and for vocational purposes.
2. Especial interest in the foreign country and its people, considerable knowledge of its past and present and a broadened attitude toward other civilizations than our own.
3. Ability to use orally and in intelligible fashion a larger stock of foreign words, phrases and sentences.
4. Increased ability to understand and to enjoy the literature (in the original or in translation) and the art of other nations, and greater curiosity about such matters.
5. Greater interest in the accurate use of English.
6. Increased knowledge of the development and the structure of English and of other languages.
7. Ability to write the language with the aid of a dictionary and other helps.

It may be repeated, in closing this part of the discussion, that the attainment of the immediate or instrumental objectives of the course is essential for any further considerable benefit to accrue. As has been suggested, it is quite possible to make a good deal of progress toward several of the more general ultimate objectives by lessons in general language, by special remedial practice in English grammar, by a reading and discussion course in English about one or more foreign countries, and by wide reading in translation of foreign works. In fact such instruction will be of great

benefit to many students who do not study modern languages, and is almost certainly preferable for those who merely "take" a modern language without ever attaining a considerable degree of mastery, of reading ability at least. A fundamental obligation rests, therefore, upon teachers of modern languages, as of all other subjects, not only to fix their objectives but to ascertain whether they are being attained by most of their students. Failure by considerable numbers to reach a satisfactory point may mean that the objectives as formulated are not valid for those conditions, or that method, materials, teacher equipment, or student capacity and effort are inadequate. The foregoing list of objectives must, therefore, be regarded chiefly as providing a working basis for teaching and testing and experimentation, in the classroom and in the laboratory. While as far as it now seems to be possible, the items have been formulated with the realities in mind, the evidence now available in regard to the results of classroom efforts is largely negative in character. Much of the ground-work remains to be done. More careful analyses will dictate other items or a different phraseology and may suggest other hypotheses on which to base our professional thinking.

SUMMARIZING CONCLUSIONS

1. While the vocational need for a knowledge of modern languages is limited, the proportion of former students of these subjects who consider that their language study time in secondary school and in college was well spent, and who record that their language knowledge has been useful to them in after life, is sufficiently large to give encouragement to the advocates of modern language teaching in public secondary schools and in colleges. At the same time, however, the testimony of a number of these persons and of various professional groups in regard to the usability of their knowledge of the languages they have studied makes it evident that modern language courses should yield a higher degree of ability to use the languages than is now generally the case.

2. The existing variableness in the scholastic point and the age at which a modern language is begun in junior high school, in almost any year of regular and senior high schools and in college, and the almost total lack of experimental data in regard to the attainment under these varying conditions, makes it practically impossible to formulate definite recommendations regarding the optimum point of beginning and the minimum length of a useful course. Figures given elsewhere, however, make it clear that two years is at present the maximum period of study for a very large majority of secondary students in the United States, and that in schools enrolling about 20 per cent of modern language students instruction in the subject is limited to two years. Consequently whatever results of modern language study are valuable for general educative purposes and

for specific usefulness in after life must, under present conditions, be attained by most students within this period of time.

3. It is generally accepted as a fact that the desirable results of foreign language study are cumulative in character and, other things being equal, bear a close relationship in quality to continuance in the subject through a period of time. It is highly to be desired, therefore, (1) that the question of continuance in the subject be studied in schools and in school systems from various points of view; and (2) that more serious efforts be made to evaluate achievement under ordinary and under experimental conditions, particularly with regard to what usable and durable language abilities are developed and can be developed in a given period. This is all the more necessary (1) because only a minority of the selected teachers consulted were of the opinion that a two-year course is long enough to enable as many as 50 per cent of their pupils to develop the ability to read and to write the language — and a still smaller minority in the case of ability to speak; and (2) because the scores made on the American Council tests in French, German, and Spanish indicate that at least 50 per cent of the two-year group and at least 30 per cent of the three-year group cannot use the foreign language for reading and for writing with even a moderate degree of ease.

4. Teachers in general appear to have less confidence that their pupils realize the instrumental aims (reading, writing, speaking, understanding the spoken word) than that they attain other and less direct objectives, such as improvement in English, the development of literary and artistic appreciation, of habits of sustained effort and the like. There is evidence that the attainment of some of this group of objectives is favored in a superior degree by modern language study; in other cases either no evidence is available or what we have is difficult to interpret with confidence. While a similar uncertainty in regard to the attainment of many ultimate objectives prevails in all fields, it is the part of wisdom in modern languages to narrow the list of objectives to those items that may be directly connected with definite classroom activities, and to assume that few or no desirable results can usually be attained unless, deliberately or unwittingly, the teacher and the class engage in activities that contribute to their achievement.

It is, furthermore, not unlikely that the prevalent complaint of teachers that they have an overlarge proportion of students who lack "linguistic ability" is to be explained in part by their failure to limit their aims to the kind of abilities that can be generally developed and to the kind of knowledge that can be mastered in the time allotted to modern languages in the programs of most secondary school students.

II

CONTENT OF THE MODERN LANGUAGE COURSE

Introductory remarks: An analysis of possible causes of failure. — A grave danger in the discussion of any educational question is that complex conditions are often simplified by the advocates of the various principles to a point where one has apparently merely to choose an adequate solution. The contrary peril is to dwell on the various factors that complicate each situation until, as in the story of the centipede that could not decide which leg to move first, all action is paralyzed. In modern language discussions, the tendency has been rather in the former direction. The arguments for or against a given classroom technique have, for example, often been advanced as though all other variables could be readily eliminated. It should be clear from what precedes that no such fortunate state of affairs prevails in our field. An attempt to analyze more explicitly the possible causes of failure may well serve as an introduction to the topic presented in the present chapter in order to forewarn readers that the Investigating Committee harbors no illusions in regard to the simplicity of the general situation.

It is, of course, possible that waste in education, measured in terms of the students who fail to attain the objectives of a given subject, is inevitable, like waste in war or in business or in any other large scale operation involving great numbers of persons and highly complex situations. It is possible that the average secondary school youth is such an inefficient agent mentally that no type of instruction yet devised can cut down appreciably the enormous disparity between effort and accomplishment even in the obviously fundamental subjects, like arithmetic in the elementary grades where the outcomes in ability to perform are relatively so small.¹ But we must have a point of departure for our thinking in educational matters, and for this we cannot avoid the assumption that no very great value can accrue from any subject in cases in which a large number of students fail to attain the valid and desirable classroom objectives. In

¹ " . . . the results obtained in the arithmetic of grades seven and eight are very unsatisfactory. We assume that in the first six grades the child shall obtain a reasonable degree of accuracy and speed in the fundamental operations with integers and fractions. The result of tests shows that this assumption is not even realized in the seventh and eighth grades. . . . This failure is probably not due to an insufficient amount of drill; it seems to be due rather to the fact that drill is not directed at specific disabilities. The results of available tests do not in general enable us to analyze the pupil's difficulties." Schorling in *Reorganization of Secondary Mathematics*, 1923, p. 187.

such cases, which are numerous, the possible causes of failure are also numerous. Let us try to enumerate them:

1. The objectives proposed are not valid for the time available.
2. The valid objectives proposed are not clearly kept in mind and striven for by teacher and by students. Something else takes the center of the stage.
3. The method actually used is not suitable.
4. The content of the course — this includes the kind of activities at which students spend their time and the distribution of emphasis — is not suitable, either in kind or in amount, or in both.
5. The equipment and teaching power of the instructor are inadequate to the task.
6. The class is made up of disparate elements as regards knowledge of the subject.
7. The class contains too large a proportion of students who can not, or will not, do what is necessary to attain the objectives that motivate the instruction.
8. The class testing program is not such as to disclose the weaknesses of each pupil and to enable the instructor to diagnose accurately the weak spots of individuals and of the class in order to take the necessary remedial measures.

To these possible causes of failure in modern language instruction, causes which are in a certain sense “internal,” since they proceed from deficiencies in the organization or in the conduct of the instruction, we may add for completeness’ sake certain “external” causes which figure largely in discussions in modern language meetings, but which are not professional problems, strictly speaking:

9. The teacher’s weekly teaching load is too heavy for effective work.
10. Classes are too large.
11. The pressure of college requirements interferes with the proper conduct of the work.

It is unquestionably true that the teaching load of secondary school teachers in all subjects is too heavy. No one can conduct classes for twenty-five hours weekly or more and retain the physical and mental freshness necessary for the teacher’s task. Still less with such a schedule can one keep abreast of one’s profession, whether on the side of subject matter or of educational theory and practice. One reason why the secondary teacher in France remains at such a high level of scholarly effectiveness throughout his career is that his training prepares him for scholarly activity and his teaching schedule is not so heavy that he must give up all reading and writing on his own account.

With respect to the first list of eight possible causes of failure, we can say of it only that it has grown out of an examination of the situation, and that each item has been touched upon or will come up for consideration in the course of the present discussion. The first, second, and fourth items have already been considered in the light of available data; the sixth, seventh, and eighth will receive attention in the discussion of class organization; the fifth falls only indirectly within the scope of this discussion;

and the question of method which is implicit in the whole discussion bulks large in the present chapter and in the one especially devoted to that topic. While the modern language problem has many factors, and while the interdependence of these factors is very close, it is probably true that the prevalence in a system or in a school of one or more of the unfavorable conditions suggested in the list would suffice to make both teachers and pupils work at a low rate of efficiency. The expository portions of the preceding pages have tended to demonstrate that in most cases causes one, two, four, and seven are operative in the modern language secondary course in general and particularly during the first two years. Consequently certain general deductions have been drawn with regard to the necessity for a revision and delimitation of objectives, especially for the first two years, and for a more careful consideration of whether enrollment in modern language classes ought not in a general way to be restricted to students whose interests and abilities and probable continuance in the subject render it likely that they will profit by instruction in this field. On the first point there is available sufficient data to warrant fairly definite conclusions, as the reader has already observed; on the second the various aspects of the situation are less clear, as will appear in a subsequent chapter. Meanwhile, if the reader of these pages will mentally review what has already been said and will test his own thinking on these matters, as well as the Committee's presentation, in the light of some such analysis of the possible causes of deficiencies in the results of modern language teaching in secondary schools, he will in all probability see the situation more clearly and more nearly as a whole and form conclusions of a more realistic nature.

ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS TOWARD THE PRESENT COURSE OF STUDY

The results of the inquiry of the Classical Committee into the opinion of Latin teachers regarding the standard secondary school course¹ disclosed a very prevalent belief that both in kind and in amount the regulation requirements are unsatisfactory. No such condition of affairs was uncovered by the Study Committee with respect to the character of the texts in the course in modern languages, probably because such a large freedom of choice is permitted. At the same time about 47 per cent of the 511 teachers replying to a question on the Selected Teachers' Questionnaire regarding the effect of college entrance requirements on the teaching situation answered that they would train their students differently but for this influence, and about 30 per cent of 471 replying to a similar question in regard to meeting certification requirements for college entrance indicated a similar attitude of protest. A respectable minority of the total number of teachers consulted indicated dissatisfaction with the organization of the subject matter of the course, both as to the character and the

¹ *Classical Investigation*, Part I, Chapter IV, *passim*.

quantity of the material, particularly in first and in second year. It is clear, therefore, that the teachers in our field, while not in revolt, are nevertheless not prepared to say that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. The evidence presented in the preceding chapter in regard to the prevailing length of the period of modern language study and the mean performance at the various school levels lends weight to these expressions of uneasiness on the part of a considerable number of members of the profession.

CERTAIN BASIC CURRICULUM STUDIES

Vocabulary. — Of what does the modern language course in secondary schools consist? With what material — grammatical, lexicographical, literary, "cultural" — may we assume a successful student is familiar at the various stages of the course, particularly at the end of the second year?

There is, of course, no categorical answer to this question. As regards vocabulary, a number of studies¹ have shown how little uniformity there is in word stock presented by the textbooks that have been prepared as the basis for first- and for second-year work and, consequently, provide the word material most persistently practised in the classroom. Wood found that only 134 words were common to 16 well-known textbooks containing about 6000 different words, and that in order to get a list of 1000 basic words we would be obliged to include some words that occur in only 9 of the 16. He points out, also, that in a certain junior high school French list of 892 words, prepared according to the deliberate judgment of competent teachers, nearly one-eighth are not to be found in the Henmon *Word Book*, made up of the 3900 words encountered at least five times in a count of 400,000 running words, and that about 10 per cent of the words in the list are common to fewer than four of the textbooks examined.² It would appear desirable to base the oral and the written works of the first two years on a minimal core vocabulary,³ which should consist of the vocabulary stock most essential to attainment of the immediate objectives of the work of this period. If, for example, the prime aims of the course are oral facility, the minimum vocabulary common to all students in all schools would under present conditions contain some words that might not have a sufficiently high range and frequency to occur in a vocabulary

¹ E.g., B. D. Wood, "Comparative Study of the Vocabularies of Sixteen French Textbooks," *Modern Language Journal*, XI, 263; Cartwright, "Study of Vocabularies of Eleven Spanish Grammars and Fifteen Spanish Reading Texts," *Modern Language Journal*, X, No. 1, 1-14; Keniston, "Common Words in Spanish," *Hispania*, III, 85-96; Mary Ellen Murray, *Vocabulary in the First Two Years of a French Course in High School*, unpublished MS. in the files of the Study.

² For a specimen of possible procedure readers may refer to the *Third Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, 1926, pp. 181 ff.

³ Cf. E. W. Bagster-Collins, "Standardization of the Vocabulary in Beginners' Books," *Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik*, XVIII, 245-248.

planned primarily for reading purposes.¹ Furthermore, it is evident from Miss Murray's study of a typical second-year French course that commonly used reading texts vary far more in the scope and the nature of the vocabulary employed than most of us realize and hence that a given group of texts may harmonize surprisingly little from this point of view, though frequently prescribed for the same course.

The word books and idiom lists in French, German, and Spanish (see the Appendix to this volume) are of the greatest importance in this connection. They are based on counts made from the standpoint of range and frequency and cover a large number of running words, representing many different categories of written discourse. They thus present for the modern foreign languages something comparable to the word counts in English that have affected appreciably the teaching of English spelling and reading in this country. It is now possible to say which are the most widely used words and idiomatic expressions in written discourse in the French, German and Spanish languages and to select the vocabulary to be learned by first- and second-year students with a view to its value for reading purposes. The possibilities of such word and idiom lists in making specially prepared reading texts for the early stages will be noticed later. The idiom lists are all the more useful as most previous compilations are encyclopedic in character and do not help much in the classroom. These contributions to the organization of the curriculum on an objective basis should prove to be among the most useful outcomes of the activities of the Study.²

Grammatical topics. — Less attention has been paid to analysis of the grammatical and the "cultural" content of the course. It is fairly evident that there is a high degree of agreement among textbook writers in regard to the grammatical topics considered essential for the work of the first two years. Any experienced teacher of modern languages could make a

¹ A frequent criticism of Henmon's *French Word Book*, as of Buchanan's *Graded Spanish Word Book*, is that it either does not contain, or shows a low frequency for, such words as the names of the days of the week, of the seasons, the cardinal numerals, and words like *crayon*, *plume*, that are considered by many teachers to be of prime importance for the classroom vocabulary. The obvious comments upon this criticism are two. In the first place, the list is based upon written French and includes the familiar words of spoken discourse only to the extent that these appear frequently in the basic texts. This condition necessarily prevails in any list compiled from written sources and makes it valuable primarily as a basis for learning to read the foreign language. In the next place, there is nothing to prevent teachers from supplementing this or any other vocabulary so compiled by the words they really need for classroom purposes, which would, in all likelihood, be very few. One defect in the Henmon list is that the element of range of occurrence was not taken into account, which occasionally allowed words used frequently in one text to bulk as large in the count as those that were used in several texts. (Cf. the unfavorable criticism by Lucy M. Gay in the *Modern Language Journal*, XII, pp. 365-369.) The obvious remedy for this is to make a count in which both range and frequency are taken into account. This demand is met by Buchanan's *Graded Spanish Word Book*, Morgan's *German Frequency Word Book*, and Vander Beke's *French Word Book*. See Appendix to this volume.

² Ward's *Minimum French Vocabulary Text Book* (Macmillan, 1926) represents a practical application of one of the uses of such word lists. Another example may be found in the account of the Young experiment in teaching French (see below, pp. 151-154). Of great importance are the idiom lists: in French by Cheydeleur, in German by Hauch and in Spanish by Keniston; cf. Vols. XVI, X and XI of the "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees on Modern Languages," Macmillan Co., 1929.

table of contents for a new beginners' book almost without looking at another book except to verify the order of the topics. There exists here, by common consent, a canon from which very few depart except, perhaps, to include certain more debatable items. However, this canon is based rather on common consent than on the range and the frequency with which the various topics occur in the modern language as current today in written form. We have, unfortunately, no data on this score comparable to that for vocabulary contained in the Henmon and the Wood studies for French, Buchanan's *Graded Spanish Word Book*, the Morgan *German Frequency Word Book* and Vander Beke's *French Word Book*.¹

It is unlikely that the findings of such studies would result in any radical change in the order of the very commonest phenomena and the relative emphasis that they now receive, but it is highly probably that considerable and somewhat surprising light would be thrown on the arrangement of topics for the years after the first; for few teachers are quite clear in their minds in regard to the grammatical topics that are peculiarly matters for third- and fourth-year work. In fact, as we shall note presently, the grammar work of this stage appears to consist chiefly of a not too successful effort to prevent students from forgetting what they have already learned, and to acquaint them with rarer and more definitely literary constructions.

Furthermore, while our textbooks for first and for second year differ from one another rather in the attitude of their authors toward method, in exercise material and vocabulary and in the teaching devices they provide than in the selection of grammatical phenomena, they vary as widely as possible in the actual amount of attention that they devote to the vocabulary, the idiomatic expressions, and the grammatical material which they present. An analysis of widely used texts from the standpoint of the range and the frequency of recurrence of the different items would yield quite striking results and would be very illuminating for teachers in search of satisfactory books on which to base their class work. No authoritative and complete studies of this kind are known to the Study Committee, but enough sampling has been done² to prove that it is quite

¹ Vigorous efforts were made by the Study Committee to bring into existence studies of syntactical frequencies in French, German and Spanish. Notwithstanding the cordial and devoted collaboration of a considerable number of our colleagues, the task proved to be so extensive and so difficult that it could not be carried through as originally planned. However, a considerable amount of valuable data was gathered, which will be made available in print at the earliest possible date.

² An unpublished article by Professor R. E. Rockwood giving the frequency and range of four common phenomena in five French grammars and two reading texts reflects the situation. One grammar showed 298 illustrations of the use of *de plus* the definite article to express the partitive relation, distributed over 300 pages. Another beginners' book yielded 81 cases distributed over 100 pages. In the two reading texts (*Perrichon*, and *L'Abbé Constantin*) the construction occurred 53 times in 80 pages and 72 times in 135 pages respectively. The agreement of the past participle with a preceding direct object is illustrated 165 times in the first grammar, over a range of 223 pages; in the second book, 37 times over a range of 120 pages. This construction occurs in *Perrichon* 45 times; in *L'Abbé Constantin* 66 times. The occurrence of two personal pronoun objects preceding the verb is illustrated in the first grammar 182 times over a range of 200 pages; in the second grammar there are no occurrences of the construction, which is found in *Perrichon* 26 times and in *L'Abbé Constantin* 79 times.

possible to construct in this way very reliable measures of the probable effectiveness of first and second language books, measures that will supplement in a definite way such more general considerations as those proposed by the late J. D. Deihl in one of the few significant discussions of the choice of textbooks.¹ These measures, if available, would not be automatic; a mere count of the vocabulary, of the idiomatic expressions and of the other items would not suffice. Textbook makers must not only choose the significant items; they must see to it that they recur in a sort of rhythm or cycle and thus become definitely a part of the language stock of their students. Each new book would have to be analyzed from this point of view with the aid of rough formulas based on the sort of studies just referred to, but if such studies were available, one may confidently predict that they would affect to no small degree and in a highly beneficial way the technique of textbook making.

Material in reading texts bearing on foreign civilizations. — In a preceding paragraph there was a reference to the fact that there is no canon of the "cultural" content of the modern language course. By this term is meant the informative and suggestive elements provided by the course — whether contained in the reading texts or emanating from the teacher or furnished by classroom equipment or gained from assigned readings in English — which should serve to develop a better understanding of the foreign country in all the aspects that are capable of interesting and instructing American students and of broadening their outlook.

Necessity of measuring reading material for cultural elements. — The extent to which elements of the course are *cultural* in the broadest sense of the word will depend entirely upon the ability of the teacher to give them life and interest, and upon the capacities of students to perceive the relation between the external phenomena of a civilization and the civilization itself. Some who have no more knowledge of France or of Spain than Jaufré Rudel had of the Faraway Princess, thrill as he did to an idea of an ineffable charm, but the rôle of the educator is to promote understanding rather than emotion, and for understanding, information, even though humdrum in nature, is essential. Thus, while the more tender-minded and esthetic souls may consider any quantitative researches for cultural material in classic or modern authors as sheer impertinence and representative of a barbaric tendency to "standardize," to measure off doses of sweetness and light, nevertheless the sin of trying to find out what suggestive and informative material provides the proper background for our students' reading and of scrutinizing commonly read texts in order to discover what they actually come in contact with, does not appear to be much more heinous or much less necessary than that of observing and noting the facts regarding Goethe's or Cervantes' use of syntax and vocabulary, provided in

¹ *Modern Language Journal*, II, 368-372.

neither case one is so uncultured as to think that, having done so, one has plumbed genius to its depths. In this case, as in all others, information of various kinds about the foreign country — its history, its climate, its civil and political institutions, the sources and particular character of the *mœurs* of its people — is but the hand-maid to a more vivid apprehension of its literature, its art, and the rôle it has played in the development of civilization. Our students of modern languages are, for the most part, but poorly informed on such matters at the very time when their need of information in order to comprehend fully what they read is greatest. We expect them, apparently, to understand so well what they read that they will gather therefrom the *Kulturkunde* they need in order to understand still more completely. A scrutiny of the course-outlines of numerous schools in all parts of the country discloses few attempts on the part of individuals or of committees to single out those facts and observations about the foreign country that will most quickly give young students the orientation they need.¹

Method of finding reading material containing cultural elements. — Two operations are therefore necessary in order to put this element of the course on a clearcut basis: The first is to establish by a consensus of the best opinion obtainable what our students should come to know of a given country and its civilization in order both to understand better what they read and to add to their general education. The second is to analyze the books that are usually read at the different stages of the secondary course for the purpose of ascertaining as definitely as possible what parts of such a program are contained, explicitly and implicitly, in a given combination of texts. The results of the first procedure would, when properly digested, provide a sort of norm both of topics and of attainment by which the content of a given group of reading matter may be judged and, when necessary, supplemented.

Three experimental studies of cultural material in French and Spanish texts. — As stated in the preceding chapter, the second of these two inquiries has been made, for French and for Spanish.² Miss Gilman studied twenty-two French texts, all but six of which are literary in character, basing her selection on those most frequently used in the high schools of Illinois. As she found, however, that this list agreed with a composite publisher's list of the most frequently read texts in the country generally, her analysis has a wide application to the college as well as to the secondary school

¹ The *Denver Course of Study Monographs* in French and in junior high school Spanish form an interesting and noteworthy exception to this statement. See also the *Informational Syllabus and Reading Lists in Modern Languages* issued by the New York City Board of Education, March, 1927, 62 pages.

² Gertrude M. Gilman, "The Cultural Material in French Curriculum of Illinois High Schools"; G. and H. Kurz, "Cultural Content of French Reading Texts Used in College Courses"; M. and J. Van Horne, "Cultural Content of Spanish Reading Texts at the Junior College Level"; *Studies in Modern Language Teaching*, "Publications of American and Canadian Committees," Vol. XVII.

course.¹ Grace and Harry Kurz did the same thing for the ten French texts most read at the junior college stage (first and second year), after striking from their college list the titles already occurring on Miss Gilman's; and Margaret and John Van Horne performed a similar task for the Spanish texts usually read in first- and in second-year college work.² No especial study was made of secondary school reading texts in Spanish, but, as it would be easy to show, the situation here is much the same as for French: college teachers of first- and second-year classes choose the same titles as those that figure on the secondary school reading list. Furthermore the results of the three studies are in such harmony that a fourth inquiry of a similar nature and using the same technique could hardly yield anything very different.

The authors of these studies were fully alive to the perils of their enterprise. They frankly left out of account in their analysis the esthetic aspects of the works. In the case of a number of the titles cited this element is not considerable enough to cause even the most ruthless analyst any great qualms, but they endeavored to examine each text in accordance with a fixed scheme and thus to attain as high a degree of objectivity as possible. Briefly, the scheme was to assign each item encountered to a suitable subject category (Art, burial, Catholic Church, clothing, and dress, education, etc., — to name only a few of the long list based on the headings in use by the Library of Congress), and at the same time to give it a "weighting" or value by means of a "keyword," such as "statement," "mention," "allusion," "explanation," etc., noting in each case whether the item occurs in the text or in the vocabulary, or in the editorial matter. After allowance is made for all the defects of such a method,³ the results enable us to appraise with considerably more accuracy than

¹ A perusal of the sixteen titles is sufficient evidence of this: *Le Voyage de M. Perrichon*, *L'Abbé Constantin*, *La Poudre aux yeux*, *Les Misérables* (Holt), *Sans Famille*, *La Mare au diable*, *Colomba*, *Pêcheur d'Islande*, *Le Petit Chose* (Ginn), *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*, *Three French Comedies* (*L'Été de la Saint-Martin*, *Vent d'Ouest*, *La Lettre chargée*), *La Tulipe noire*, *Eugénie Grandet*, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, *Hernani*, *La Grammaire*.

² The Kurz study is based on the following texts: About, *Le Roi des montagnes*; Buffum, *French Short Stories*; Daniels, *Contes de la France Contemporaine*; Daudet, *Lettres de mon moulin* (Heath); de Sauzé, *Contes gais*; Dondo, *Pathelin et autres pièces*; Kurz, *Lectures pour tous*; Olmsted and Barton, *Elementary French Reader*; Pargment, *La France et les français*; Smith and Greenleaf, *French Reader*.

The Van Horne study includes the following titles: *La Hermana San Sulpicio*, *Zaragueta*, *El capitán Veneno*, Benavente's *Tres Comedias*, José, *Historia de España* (Romera-Navarro), *Fortuna*, *Antología de Cuentos Españoles* (Hills and Buceta), *Marianela*, *Beginners' Spanish Reader* (L. A. Wilkins), *El Final de Norma*, *Doña Perfecta*, *España Pintoresca*, *Doña Clarines*, *El Sombrero de Tres Picos*, *Cuentos y Leyendas*, *Don Quixote*, *Confesiones de Un Pequeño Filósofo*, *El Pájaro Verde*, *Canción de Cuna*, *María*.

³ It may be well to cite Miss Gilman's remarks on this score: "To the critical observer there appear certain limitations to the technique of this study. . . . First, emotional qualities . . . , because of the extreme subjectivity of their nature, can not be taken into account. Then . . . there are esthetic possibilities of the French reading course that can not be appraised Culture . . . includes not only information about a country but also an appreciation of the artistic side of its literature. If this analysis shows one text to be richer in information than another, it does not follow that it is necessarily of greater value to the curriculum. . . . Nor is it necessarily proved that students will derive more information from one text than from another containing less matter that falls under our application of the word 'cultural.'" *Op. cit.*, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees on Modern Languages," Vol. XVII,

most teachers have hitherto appeared to do the kind and the amount of "cultural" material, as it has been defined, on which we may draw as the result of reading a given group of texts.

A rapid summary of Miss Gilman's conclusions may be appropriate here. The subject heading most commonly occurring is geography; next come history and marriage rites and customs. Certain categories occur rarely. Among these are art, business and professions, clothing and dress, education, food, law, politics and government. The key word or "weighting" to which by far the largest number of items are assigned is "mention." In other words, places, persons, events, institutions are, as might be expected, usually merely referred to or mentioned as a matter of course, leaving to the reader the task of supplying what is necessary to understand. This state of affairs is, of course, perfectly natural; the books were not written to supply "cultural" material to foreign students. It is, however, one thing to recognize this upon demonstration, and another to take it definitely into account in supplying material to fill up this gap in the course-content, for obviously the gap exists, a gap that the reading texts of a literary character can not fill unless teachers systematically work to that end. If they do not, it is probable that the outcome will closely resemble the unsatisfactory situation reported in the Classical Report (p. 99) in regard to the attainment by second-year students of a knowledge of the historical background of their Latin studies.

The results of the three inquiries in question render the situation very clear from one point of view. We now know reasonably well what the possibilities are of a number of widely used reading texts in French and in Spanish as sources of *Kulturkunde* and have at our disposal a technique which may be applied to other texts that may be of interest. It is not suggested that texts should be accepted or rejected exclusively, or even chiefly, on the basis of the results of such an analysis, but that the showing they make is one of the significant factors in appraising their contribution to that development of knowledge about the foreign country and interest in its life which is so generally proposed as one of the most far-reaching results of the study of modern languages. These studies show also the fundamental importance of the teacher's rôle with respect to this part of the work, particularly in a two-year course. By talks on special subjects in the classroom and in the foreign language club, by explanatory comment on the reading, by the assignment of special readings in English and in the foreign language, the teacher can enormously enrich the course from this point of view.

From the preceding paragraphs it appears that a good deal remains to be done in order to complete the analysis of the basic material of the modern language course as it stands today, and still more in order to provide the basic materials of the course of the future. As regards the present state

of affairs the immediate tasks to be done belong largely to the "Hand- und Fingerarbeit" class: counting, tallying, tabulating, comparing, compiling. For the course of the future the materials so derived must be subjected to experimentation in various combinations and must be rejected, enlarged, renewed, supplemented as the results demand.

CONTENT OF THE TYPICAL MODERN LANGUAGE COURSE

Amount and kind of reading. — In an attempt to scrutinize the course as it now stands, an analysis was made¹ of all the state modern language bulletins that could be procured. It was found that twenty states, and among these some of the largest and most important educationally, issue no such documents but leave these matters to the school communities themselves. It was also found that the task of tabulating documents of this kind was extremely difficult despite a certain uniformity in the choice of texts and the amount of work laid out. As regards the amount of reading normally to be expected the averages run about as follows:

TABLE 19

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PAGES OF FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH PRESCRIBED FOR READING IN SECONDARY SCHOOL COURSES IN THE FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH YEAR OF STUDY AS SHOWN IN BULLETINS ISSUED BY STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION.

YEAR OF STUDY	FRENCH		GERMAN		SPANISH	
	States	Pages	States	Pages	States	Pages
1st . . .	12	115	9	80	10	100
2nd . . .	15	300	8	180	14	200
3rd . . .	9	450	5	300	9	380
4th . . .	8	500	4	500	4	500

As has already been pointed out, these figures for first and for second year are in essential agreement with the testimony of a considerable number of selected teachers, who estimate also their average amount of classroom and supplementary reading for third and fourth years.²

Types of reading material selected. — The question on this point was framed in order to ascertain the amount of different types (fiction, drama, poetry, etc.) read in class and as supplementary material, which accounts for the diversity of practice indicated by the figures in Table 20.

In most cases the student completing third-year French will have read in all not much over 600 pages. Most third-year German students will have read about 500 pages. In the case of each language about half of the

¹ By Sturgis Leavitt and S. A. Stoudemire of the University of North Carolina. The unpublished MS. of their report, prepared in 1926, is in the files of the Study.

² See p. 101 above for data on reading in the first two years.

third-year group will have read approximately 300 additional pages in French, 180 in German and 130 in Spanish. The reading material is for the most part fiction and drama, the former dominating, with a limited amount of poetry (6-10 pages in French — 44 teachers, and in Spanish — 10 teachers; and 45-50 pages in German — 15 teachers), and 35-45 pages of newspaper matter — relatively more in Spanish classes than in French

TABLE 20

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PAGES OF FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH READ IN THE THIRD AND THE FOURTH YEAR OF STUDY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AS REPORTED BY TEACHERS REPLYING TO THE SELECTED TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE, DIVIDED AS "READ FOR CLASS RECITATION" AND "SUPPLEMENTARY TO READING FOR CLASS RECITATION," WITH DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO GROUPS OF TEACHERS REPORTING.

YEAR OF STUDY	FRENCH READING				GERMAN READING				SPANISH READING			
	For Class Recitation		Supplementary		For Class Recitation		Supplementary		For Class Recitation		Supplementary	
	Pages	Teachers Reporting	Pages	Teachers Reporting	Pages	Teachers Reporting	Pages	Teachers Reporting	Pages	Teachers Reporting	Pages	Teachers Reporting
Third	270-275	170	196-200 91- 95 40- 45 6- 10	96 93 49 44	166-170	23	96-100 76- 80 46- 50	12 15 15	176-180	103	86- 90 76- 80 36- 40	48 30 41
Fourth	300-325	55	226-250 96-100 30- 35	30 33 20	196-200	7	126-130 25- 30	6 6	196-200	50	150-155 91- 95 35- 40	30 25 22

(40 per cent *vs.* 29 per cent of the largest number of teachers voting in each language). If we add to the third-year figures, 500 additional pages for French, 350 for German, and 400 for Spanish, we shall in all probability have a fairly precise estimate of the total reading in the various languages by students who follow the subject for four years in classes where more than the average amount is read.

Fiction dominates in all the languages at all stages. About 50 per cent of the second-year group of French teachers (230 in all) report the reading of 75-80 pages of drama; about 25 per cent report 20-25 pages of newspaper material; and a similar fraction report 70-75 pages of "other types of prose," presumably of historical and other informative works. About 20 per cent of the second-year German teachers read with their students 55-60 pages of drama, and an equal number read 45-50 pages of other prose works. Approximately one-third of the teachers reporting on second-year Spanish (137 in all) read 15-20 pages of newspapers and 85-90 pages of other prose writing, but almost no plays figure on the Spanish reading program, even in third and fourth year.

About these same proportions hold in the more advanced years except

that French and German classes, in comparison with Spanish, report the reading of a relatively greater amount of poetry, with German leading. A larger relative return on reading from teachers of Spanish might alter the proportions. One would surmise, however, that German high school classes read few newspapers and, in third and in fourth years, relatively more poetry; that French classes read relatively more drama, and that Spanish classes read relatively more newspaper material — but no great quantity — and less drama and poetry. The lists of reading texts given above in connection with the Gilman, Kurz and Van Horne inquiries are quite representative (cf. *supra*, p. 119, notes).

The grammatical materials. — It is more difficult to present in brief form the content of the representative course in grammar. Some of the state bulletins specify the number of lessons in a given textbook.¹ Examples are: Fraser and Squair, *Shorter Course*, 1-49; *New Chardenal*, 1-74; Hills and Ford, *First Course*, 1-37; Wilkins' *First Book*, 1-20; Joynes & Wesselhoeft, 1-35. Other bulletins merely mention the textbook for each year, or suggest several for first year, adding for second year, "Complete the grammar used." In still others, typical entries are: "Spanish I, Rudiments of Grammar"; "Spanish II, Completion of Grammar." It is probable that the assignment of a definite number of lessons was made at the suggestion of teachers who found that a given number of pages could be "covered" by an average class in a semester, rather than from an examination of the text with a view to including certain topics at certain stages, or to limiting the grammatical material to topics known to be essential for the attainment of a given unit of work. We could, of course, tabulate the frequencies of the various grammatical topics contained in the texts named and thus list quite specifically the content of the course of the first two years, but, as we have already remarked, there is such a high degree of agreement that this is hardly necessary. In regard, however, to third- and fourth-year work in grammar, the situation is most indefinite. If the evidence of a large number of course-outlines is trustworthy, it is highly probable that much time at these stages is spent in relearning the so-called elements of the preceding period, in learning the conjugation of less common irregular verbs, in studying the more complex uses of the subjunctive and in learning to use less common idioms on the basis of a more advanced text in "prose composition," that is, of translation into the foreign tongue. No more precise statement can be ventured here because the course outlines consulted do not warrant it.

A sampling of attainment in French grammar. — It would be highly significant to ascertain by an analysis of grammatical errors in written work how large a proportion of the mistakes in the advanced years is due to imperfect functional control of grammatical material that, in accepted

¹ Leavitt and Stoudemire, *op. cit.*

practice, has been studied during the elementary years. Teachers of third-year French composition courses in college know, for example, how abundant are the errors in partitives and relative pronouns and tense usage even after two years of college or three years of secondary school work. Some evidence can be secured from a careful analysis of the various grammar test papers. An examination of the scores made by 200 *sixth* semester pupils on the American Council Alpha French grammar test (cf. pp. 54-57) yields the following results, which will serve as specimens: On three out of the four questions bearing on the partitive, 75 per cent, 59 per cent, 66 per cent of the 200 gave the correct answers. The proportion of correct replies to a question involving the agreement of the past participle of *mettre* with the preceding object was 62.5 per cent; to one on the plural of the possessive adjective, 50 per cent; to two questions on the disjunctive pronoun, 60 per cent and 86 per cent; to three questions on pronoun usage and position, 54 per cent, 54 per cent, 54 per cent; to one on the use of *en* as a pronoun, 57 per cent; to one on the present form of *achever*, 69 per cent; to one on the past indefinite of *venir* with a feminine plural subject, 64 per cent; to one on *lequel* in a very simple connection, 65 per cent; to two questions involving the use of the imperfect and the past definite (indefinite) respectively, 54.5 per cent and 54 per cent. Since nearly all these questions took the form of French sentences with a missing element, they were as nearly functional in character as could be devised, and all belong very clearly to the elementary stage of French. A similar state of affairs in regard to the use in writing of the elements of Latin by third-year students was disclosed by the Classical Investigation.¹

These pieces of evidence help to explain why the grammar work of the third and fourth years in modern languages appears largely to mark time. Teachers are aware that the kind of grammatical knowledge they have been working for has not been achieved by the end of the two-year course, and are determined to consolidate the ground for those students who remain. That they are successful only to such a limited degree is the distressing and the disquieting feature of the situation and gives point to the views held in most educational circles that more systematic efforts must be made to ascertain what is being learned by our students in the various subject matters that we teach in our schools. The results of the testing of the College Entrance Board are sufficiently disquieting — an average of about 40 per cent of the candidates ranked below 60 per cent in all subjects over a period of five years.²

The normal two-year course. — It has been clearly established that two years is now the maximum period of study for all but a relatively small number of those who begin a modern language. Let us, therefore, in order to make the situation more concrete, enumerate the component

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 91, 92, 99.

² *Twenty-fifth Annual Report, 1925*, p. 50. Cf. also pp. 2-3.

parts of a two-year course in the three principal modern languages. This enumeration is based on the examination of more than thirty course outlines for cities and individual schools.¹ The enumeration does not conform to any one of the programs, some of which differ from it widely, but is proposed as being representative.

Typical course outlines in French, German, and Spanish for secondary school. — French I. From 50 to 75 lessons in a beginner's book devoted chiefly to grammatical exposition and practice.² In such books the reading matter consists usually of paragraphs devised and composed by the author to illustrate and exemplify the grammatical topics to be taught, or, as in a few widely used texts, of semi-literary material "adapted" by the author to his purpose. It touches sometimes on French history, geography, customs, public monuments. Along with such a first book, a reader is used, consisting of a few fairy stories or legends, several *contes*, and, perhaps, a *nouvelle* — 50 to 100 pages altogether.

French II. The work of the first year is reviewed and the grammar text completed, including especial attention to the more frequent subjunctive constructions, to tense usage and to the study of idioms. The reading consists of 175–200 pages from *Perrichon (La Poudre aux yeux)*, *L'Abbé Constantin (Sans Famille, Le Petit Chose)* with portions of some such texts as *Le Français et sa patrie*, *Lavisse, Histoire de France (cours élémentaire)*, and the like.³

For the first two years in Spanish the situation is much the same: a beginners' book completed, with numerous reviews to keep the topics fresh in mind; a reader; two texts, such as *Fortuna* and *Zaraguëta*; selections from a "prepared" school reading text dealing with Spain or Latin-America; and, in a number of cases, several selections from a "composition" book as a basis for more grammar review and, in some cases, for oral work.

The tale for German runs in the same fashion: an introductory grammar, a reader, *Immensee* and a similar story or a play make up the content of the two-year course.

If the details of the class procedure as indicated by the outlines are to be interpreted at all literally, it is clear that the attention of the classroom is now taken up chiefly with exercises aimed at development of one or more of the reproductive abilities (speaking and writing) rather than with practice in reading.

¹ It includes such cities as Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, Detroit, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland, New Brunswick, New Orleans, Seattle, Spokane, St. Louis, Salt Lake City.

² The Director of Foreign Languages in one large city system considers 35 lessons of the beginners' text used there, with no reading outside the text, the maximum of profitable accomplishment in first year, whether by ninth or tenth or eleventh grade pupils. Cf. E. B. de Sauzé, *The Cleveland Plan*, John C. Winston Co., 1924, p. 77.

³ *The Cleveland Plan* referred to above suggests about 275 pages of reading in second year.

The importance attached to grammar. — That the work in grammar occupies in most cases the center of the stage is shown not only by the evidence gathered from course-outlines as presented above, but by the almost more striking fact that all grading in modern language examinations is based primarily on attainment in grammar. This is revealed by a comparison of scores on the different elements of the Alpha French test with teachers' marks.¹ The correlation coefficients between teachers' marks and the grammar scores are manifestly and uniformly higher than with scores on vocabulary or reading or composition, whether the data are drawn from a considerable number of schools or from a small number of specially selected schools. Even more striking is the evidence presented by the report of the Canadian Committee referred to elsewhere (p. 89) that the grades given by teachers in the schools of Montreal in oral proficiency in French correlate more highly with the grammar scores derived from the new-type test than with scores on any other element of the test. No matter where we turn, the evidence is cumulative that teachers in the United States and in Canada, even in schools where oral practice is a predominant element, rely chiefly on their pupils' attainment in grammar as a basis for evaluating their achievement in the language.

One outline for French says: "At the end of the second-year course the high school pupil, in addition to being familiar with the fundamentals of grammar, should be able to read for a single assignment four to five pages of the difficulty of any of the texts listed for the second year." Another proposes as objectives the ability to read fluently from the texts studied, to answer questions in French, to retell orally and in writing the stories read and to translate any simple French into good English. A third syllabus maintains that "definite knowledge of grammatical relations is highly essential; without it pupils grope in the dark," while a fourth explains that the reading of literary texts is postponed until the close of the third semester, since earlier appreciation would be impossible because of the unfamiliar grammatical constructions encountered. In the judgment of another committee the primary aim of the course is reading, "and for this . . . a mastery of grammar by a thorough drill on essentials is necessary." According to this evidence and in the light of common knowledge, members of the profession appear to believe that the ability to read depends very largely on mastery of the "essentials" of grammar, including knowledge of the inflections of irregular verbs, and on acquiring an "active" vocabulary of a thousand words, more or less, divided into semester units and largely made up of words relating to the school, the family, travel, the city, the country, the calendar, and daily life in general, which are much less prominent in word lists based on the frequency of occurrence in written French or Spanish than in textbooks for beginners. The usual

¹ See Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

test of the grammatical knowledge necessary for reading is the ability to translate into the foreign language or to write and speak in the foreign language. It is also generally held that students must speak and write in the foreign tongue with grammatical correctness, both for the acquisition of grammar and because faulty habits in speaking and writing may be developed if such training is deferred until a later date. There is also a strong probability that the value ascribed to grammatical study for disciplinary purposes and for its salutary effect upon knowledge of the mother tongue is of considerable weight in determining for the two-year course the preponderance of grammar and of exercises in grammatical application.

Emphasis on intensive study of texts. — It is also worthy of note that the testimony of those who replied to a query in regard to the relative value for the development of reading ability of extensive reading *versus* "intensive formal drill on minimum text material" is distinctly in favor of the latter for the first two years. Thus the profession appears to believe that intensive study of a limited amount of reading material is the best introduction to reading. Of high school teachers who replied, 92 per cent of the 569 voting considered this type of procedure best for first-year work and over 62 per cent of the 352 voting thought it better for second year also.¹ In the case of third and fourth years there was a very large majority in favor of "extensive" reading (81 per cent for 3rd year, 88 per cent for 4th). However, since only about 29 per cent of those who take second-year modern language in high school continue into the next class,² we should ascertain whether this intensive training yields, in the time usually available, results which are worth while in themselves and not primarily for their propaedeutic values. It is generally asserted, and with much apparent justification, that oral practice gives life to classroom work and is a valuable aid in many ways in the process of learning a modern language. If, however, median performance on the American Council tests may serve as a criterion, sufficient evidence has already been given in the preceding chapter to show that the prevalent intensive training in the elements of grammar, which apparently occupies most of the classroom time, does not yield, in the case of 50 per cent and more of the second-year students, the ability either to read or to write the foreign language with grammatical correctness, or even to apply functionally the knowledge of grammar around which the work has centered.

PRACTICE IN READING AS TRAINING FOR READING

Limited reading experience in the present normal course. — In view of the state of affairs shown in the preceding section, we are faced by two

¹ Of the 228 college teachers testifying on this question for first year, 81 per cent favored "intensive practice" on a small amount of material, while 61 per cent of 235 college teachers considered "extensive reading" more desirable in second year.

² See *supra*, p. 25, Table 3.

questions. Is the normal reading experience in the foreign tongue during the first two years sufficient to warrant the belief that what has been called the "reading attitude" can be reached? If it is not, how can the additional reading experience be gained? Few persons familiar with present conditions would think it possible to do this merely by adding something to what we already attempt to do. What then must be displaced so that students may, during the first two years, come in contact with a larger amount of reading material in the foreign language, with a more diversified vocabulary, with more kinds of subject matter through which more varied glimpses of the foreign land and its people can be obtained, and may develop the habit of using the foreign language as a tool?

It may not be amiss to state at this point that this question does not apply in every case, but in the large majority of cases. In certain schools in which the American Council tests were administered the results obtained are of relatively high quality,¹ and there are certainly others, let us hope many others, in which similar results would be obtained. Such schools are to be congratulated and encouraged. They will find it easy to compare their output at the various stages with the general level of performance and if the results are satisfactory to persist in their well-doing. Even they, however, should study the modern language history of their students. How long is the modern language course for most of those who continue the subject through the second semester? If the falling off at the end of two years is larger in the case of those who begin in Grade 9 or 10 than the normal decrease in the school enrollment, why is it? In what grade is the subject usually begun? Above all, of what quality of performance are these students capable when they discontinue? Can they read with sufficient ease and speed books that interest them to make it probable that they will continue to regard reading the foreign language as a normal thing to do? Do they pronounce sufficiently easily and well to show that they have formed durable habits of the right sort? Have they developed an especial interest in the foreign country and learned a good deal about it from various points of view? Do they know of the best books in English that one should read to gain this information and further develop this interest? Have they read in the foreign tongue several books that they liked for the entertainment they provided and the interest they aroused? If these questions are answered affirmatively, all is well. If not, the discussion that follows may be of interest to the teachers in these more fortunate schools as well as to the great majority to which the norms of performance established by the Study testing campaign apply, for we must surely appraise the output of a given school or system as well by the achievement of the majority of students as by the fine performance of the limited number who continue the subject for three years or more.

¹ Cf. *infra*, p. 251.

Possible ways of increasing reading experience. — In order to secure the necessary time for increasing the reading experience of our students various possibilities suggest themselves. For some of these it has been possible to secure some experimental data; for others, no evidence can be assembled except the opinion of experienced persons.

Reduction of oral practice. — To the question of how room is to be made for more reading, some people may reply that it may most easily be done by cutting down the oral practice of various kinds and returning to the basis on which most Latin classes are conducted. Even though one were favorably disposed to this solution on other grounds, it would be hard to maintain that it would really make more room for reading, for the few additional pages a week that could be studied in class would not provide the additional reading experience that is required to develop reading ability in two years. Only the doubling of what we do now — or the trebling — could do that.

Increased outside reading. — Another proposal would undoubtedly be to exact of the student more outside reading, of which he usually does comparatively little at this stage. We are all familiar with the numerous discussions of this subject and know how very few of our colleagues appear to find it possible to make any practical application of so familiar a proposal.¹ Is it because most teachers have not much confidence in such a plan? Or because their interest and their efforts go into grammatical work as being something more tangible, something they can test more readily? Or because their teaching load is so heavy that they lack the energy to keep track of additional activities? Or because it is really impossible to leave to "outside" work such an essential function of the class as learning to read?

Two types of course. — A third possibility is to organize reading courses for the majority of beginners, while preserving the type of course that now prevails for the small number who will continue after the second year in high school or in college. This plan would present great administrative difficulties, almost insuperable difficulties in most situations, and there would be few cases where the outside reading could be organized in a way to be really effective in kind and in amount.

These three possibilities for modifications in the modern language course involve only slight changes, comparatively speaking, which fact is perhaps the chief justification for mentioning them. We may be quite sure, however, that no such mild measures will really fit the situation as it has been revealed. It is time to consider if more drastic measures are not suggested by the evidence.

¹ Handschin (*op. cit.*, pp. 163-164) reckons for second year in high school an addition of 189 pages to the reading experience if 9 to 12 pages are assigned for "extensive" reading every tenth day. Is not the word *extensive* out of place in this connection?

Limitation of enrollment to superior students. — In the preceding chapter (p. 106) attention was invited to the causes to which modern language teachers attribute their failure to accomplish their purposes. We saw that 83 per cent of the 580 secondary school teachers voting ranked as the first of these causes the presence in their classes of too many students without "linguistic capacity." Next in order stand "too many non-academic activities" (66 per cent) and "improper classification of students" (57 per cent). Both language teachers and school authorities would encounter great difficulties in an attempt to suppress school "activities," even if it were proven to be quite desirable to do so; but the restriction of enrollment in modern language classes to students properly qualified to succeed and the reorganization of classes on the basis of attainment in subject matter are definitely the proper field of essential experimentation by teachers and by administrative officers alike. These two topics will be taken up in some detail in a later chapter (Chapter III).

In the present connection the Committee refers to possibilities in this direction only to bring out clearly a fourth remedy that must be suggested for consideration — namely, to admit to modern language classes only those students who, on the basis of previous scholastic standing, of intelligence tests, and of whatever other prognostic differentiation is possible, may be expected to attain a standard of achievement definitely above that attained by the lower half of the present enrollment in first and in second years, to keep much closer in touch with the relative progress of each student in the subject by means of standardized placement tests administered at the close of each semester or at other regular intervals, and to use the returns, combined with other information about each person, as a basis for promotion, for requiring repetition, for recommending discontinuance, or for individual remedial measures.

It has been repeatedly declared by writers on secondary education that modern language instruction should be grouped among the "extras" and should usually be offered only to students of a rather superior grade of intelligence. Just what the deadline should be if mental test scores are to be used as a basis has not been determined, although an intelligence quotient of 90 has been proposed by Professor Terman and 100 by Professor Jordan.¹ A good many modern language teachers have deplored

¹ *School Review*, XXXIII, 541, 546. Freshmen in Central Junior High School, Kansas City, who had National Intelligence test scores of less than 130 did poor work in Latin and in Spanish in 1924-25. About 40 per cent were marked "inferior" or "failure." Of those scoring more than 130, 81.4 per cent received satisfactory marks. See p. 541 and note.

Cf. de Sauzé, *op. cit.*: "Our experiments in Cleveland have shown that an intelligence quotient of 100 or more is necessary to enable a student to wrestle with the scientific aspects of language study. It means that 30 to 40 per cent of the school population should promptly be discouraged from entering these classes" (p. 14). No data are given in support of this statement. It appears that in practice this condition is not adhered to in the Cleveland schools, except perhaps in the junior high schools.

On the general topic see the citation (*infra*, p. 175, note) from *Prognosis Tests in the Modern Languages* by V. A. C. Henmon and others.

such statements as attacks upon the study of their subject and have protested in various ways against what they consider to be the uninformed utterances of outsiders. When, however, we consider the significance of the widespread belief among members of our profession that too many of the wrong kind of students are registering for modern language classes, it would appear that our colleagues and the critics against whom they protest are not so far apart after all. The phrase "lack of linguistic capacity" appears to be rather vague from the psychologist's point of view; he seems to be not at all clear about the specific symptoms or the proper method of diagnosis of such a disability. It is almost certainly a blanket formula, covering items like lack of interest, lack of application, and the like, as well as any linguistic disability that may exist apart from low general ability,¹ but many members of our profession evidently are quite clear in their minds that the phrase has a definite bearing on one of their chief difficulties.

A lengthened period of language study. — Anyone familiar with the opinions of modern language teachers knows that, in general, they consider it highly essential to pursue the study of a foreign tongue for a longer period than is customary in the United States, and cite enviously the more favorable situation of the modern language teacher in France or in Germany, who has seven to nine years in which to teach his subject. It has already been pointed out in the preceding chapter (pp. 47-48) that teachers indicate clearly their preference for a period of at least three years in which to attain the objectives of ability to read, to speak and to write and, while we have no categorical pronouncement on the subject from any large number of persons, their skepticism about a satisfactory degree of achievement in the two-year course is quite marked.

We may cite as illustrative of the opinions of many members of the profession the following passage from the report of the Junior High School Committee on Foreign Languages:²

"The minimum foreign language course which the committee can approve for a secondary school are the two-year course in Grades 11 and 12, and the three-year course begun not earlier than Grade 9. . . . The best teachers of a foreign language will not, however, be satisfied with less than the four-year course begun in Grades 7 or 8, or the six-year course begun in Grade 7; and this amount of time is necessary if second-quartile pupils are to acquire a good pronunciation, some appreciation of literary form, power to read easily ordinary books and magazine articles, with occasional reference to a dictionary, and some facility in oral and written expression of simple thought about familiar topics."

While a categorical statement on this point is impossible, certain considerations must be taken into account. It is evident that with the enrich-

¹ Cf. H. C. Morrison, *Practice of Teaching in the Secondary School*, Chicago, 1926, says, pp. 471-473: "It is certain that many cases usually classed as native inability are in fact either correctable or remedial on some of the accounts enumerated above or on others not listed, provided that the pupil's educational needs make it worth while to make the attempt."

² *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, pp. 299-300.

ment of the secondary course with new subjects there has developed a tendency among public school authorities to believe that a two-year period is the normal amount of time that can be devoted by most high school pupils to a foreign language, and that they often construct programs in such a way as to discourage a longer period of study. It is difficult to say to what extent this is necessary or educationally desirable but a demand by modern language teachers that no less than three years be regarded as a satisfactory unit would probably meet with scant favor at present, or would result practically in the restriction of modern language registration to those who from the beginning have a definite purpose of continuing for the longer time. As the public school population is overwhelmingly the largest, this would result in a sharp reduction in enrollment in the subject, which, as a last resort, might be desirable. Furthermore, as it will appear in another connection, three years do not necessarily signify anything in terms of attainment in language knowledge. It would appear to be more effective for members of the profession to establish in fairly concrete terms what constitutes an acceptable and useful degree of attainment in linguistic ability, and to insist upon students' achieving this as the necessary condition for being allowed to discontinue the subject or to continue into the next stage, whether a pupil takes two years or three years to reach this point. In the preceding chapter we have seen the conditions that prevail at present in regard to the length of the course in junior high school and in high school.

These considerations make it inevitable to ask whether the two-year course in modern languages should be retained in our secondary schools except in the case of juniors who represent a relatively high degree of maturity and of selection, or of those whose capacity and future plans — for college or for a vocation — or whose special tastes and interests make it highly probable that they will attain worth while results in that period. In view of the fact that there is a considerable number of high schools in the United States that offer modern languages for two years at most, a recommendation in favor of eliminating all two-year courses would be drastic indeed and would involve a large number of students, for we should be forced to recommend further that no college credit be given until three years of one modern language have been completed and it is safe to predict that the modern language period for most students will be definitely lengthened only if very convincing evidence is provided that three years is the minimum length of time needed by most persons to attain a minimum number of desirable objectives.

For the territory covered by the enrollment figures gathered by the Committee on Investigation (Tables 4 and 5, pp. 29-30) 207,954 modern language pupils are registered in schools that offer at most two years of instruction in the subject. This number represents 32 per cent of the

TABLE 21
REGULAR HIGH SCHOOLS IN TEN REPRESENTATIVE STATES WHICH OFFER A ONE-YEAR COURSE IN A MODERN LANGUAGE AND IN LATIN
WITH TOTAL ENROLLMENT AND TOTAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT.

STATE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OFFERING				TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN SCHOOLS OFFERING				ENROLLMENT BY LANGUAGES						
	French	German	Italian	Spanish	Latin¹	French	German	Italian	Spanish	Latin¹	French	German	Italian	Spanish	Latin¹
Massachusetts	..	3	..	4	1	..	1,881	..	1,518	43	..	89	..	84	7
New York	34	3	1	2	11	1,105	1,993	5,549	120	157	300	78	94	23	91
Virginia	12	..	..	2	10	568	..	..	124	168	97	..	..	29	90
Illinois	19	8	10	..	28	2,009	4,811	..	2,871	1,244	212	189	..	105	333
Ohio	38	..	..	9	..	3,831	..	..	1,649	..	486	..	..	215	..
Kansas	15	..	..	33	75	1,089	..	..	3,256	5,201	178	..	..	411	890
Missouri	..	..	..	1	..	761	..	..	49	..	14	..	..	5	..
Texas	2	..	..	23	8	475	..	..	1,002	505	79	..	..	358	81
Washington	7	..	..	4	11	..	..	..	690	750	120	..	..	44	142
California	13	..	..	9	15	2,460	..	..	630	1,470	..	..	..	155	140
Total	140	14	11	87	159	12,378	8,685	5,549	11,909	9,538	1,486	356	94	1,429	1,774

¹ Schools and students were not tabulated for Ohio and Missouri.

TABLE 22

REGULAR HIGH SCHOOLS IN TEN REPRESENTATIVE STATES WHICH OFFER A TWO-YEAR COURSE IN A MODERN LANGUAGE AND IN LATIN
WITH TOTAL ENROLLMENT AND TOTAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT.

STATE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OFFERING					TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN SCHOOLS OFFERING					ENROLLMENT BY LANGUAGES				
	French	German	Italian	Spanish	Latin ¹	French	German	Italian	Spanish	Latin ¹	French	German	Italian	Spanish	Latin ¹
Massachusetts	13	33	...	31	8	901	32,280	...	2,345	332	240	1,242	...	1,712	92
New York	205	15	2	43	149	14,283	16,298	5,756	9,905	5,598	3,890	915	130	908	2,932
Virginia	135	..	...	11	96	15,980	...	...	4,928	5,828	3,392	...	...	919	2,590
Illinois	147	15	...	14	373	55,636	16,879	...	33,391	37,054	5,567	860	...	3,639	10,824
Ohio	207	..	...	48	...	44,967	...	...	23,586	...	6,785	...	...	2,203	...
Kansas	20	..	...	49	159	7,430	...	...	10,646	14,677	537	...	...	1,425	...
Missouri	25	..	...	20	...	6,300	...	...	5,694	...	777	...	...	825	3,468
Texas	6	..	...	134	71	3,202	...	...	16,786	9,857	141	...	...	5,530	2,010
Washington	93	..	...	93	126	17,452	...	...	21,826	16,996	2,086	...	...	3,490	2,715
California	44	..	...	73	88	18,920	...	...	12,272	22,190	778	...	...	2,514	2,151
Total	895	63	2	516	1,070	185,071	65,457	5,756	141,379	112,532	24,193	3,017	130	23,175	26,782

¹ Schools and students were not tabulated for Ohio and Missouri.

total public secondary school registration in modern foreign languages. Table 23 has been prepared to show the enrollment by languages in the second and in the third year courses of the regular high schools of the

TABLE 23

REGULAR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES WHICH OFFER A COURSE OF THREE YEARS OR LONGER IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH, WITH LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN SECOND YEAR AND IN THE THIRD YEAR AND NUMBER OF STUDENTS DISCONTINUING THE COURSE AFTER THE SECOND YEAR.

REGION	LANGUAGE	NO. OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN 2ND YEAR OF 3- AND 4-YR. COURSE	TOTAL LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN 3RD YEAR OF 3- AND 4-YR. COURSE	TOTAL DISCONTINUANCE AFTER 2ND YEAR	PER CENT OF DISCONTINUANCE (3) (1)
			(1)	(2)	(3)	
I	FRENCH	367	18,026	9,570	8,456	
II		496	32,891	13,360	19,531	
III		68	2,454	1,073	1,391	
IV		123	7,779	2,716	5,063	
V		20	987	270	717	
VI		15	386	180	206	
VII		29	1,459	411	1,048	
VIII		41	1,770	730	1,040	
Total		1,159	(1) 65,752	(2) 28,310	(3) 37,446	57
I	GERMAN	19	757	254	503	
II		64	3,588	1,436	2,152	
III		..	..	..	..	
IV		20	858	334	524	
V		..	..	..	..	
VI		..	..	..	..	
VII		..	..	..	..	
VIII		..	..	..	..	
Total		103	(1) 5,203	(2) 2,204	(3) 3,179	60
I	SPANISH	31	1,898	806	1,092	
II		154	17,360	6,127	11,233	
III		19	1,570	523	1,047	
IV		68	5,723	1,914	3,809	
V		19	1,396	327	1,069	
VI		90	6,322	1,651	4,671	
VII		20	1,912	333	1,579	
VIII		138	7,907	2,832	5,075	
Total		539	(1) 44,088	(2) 14,513	(3) 29,575	67

eight regions that have at least a three-year course in the modern languages. A summary table presents the situation for all modern languages and for Latin (cf. Table 24). Similar tables are given also for ten states that may be considered representative of the different regions and of the country

as a whole (Tables 21, 22, 25, and 26). These tables, then, supplement those already given to show the number and distribution of schools with one-year and two-year courses in modern languages and in Latin and

TABLE 24

REGULAR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES WHICH OFFER A COURSE OF THREE YEARS OR LONGER IN A MODERN LANGUAGE AND IN LATIN, WITH COMBINED ENROLLMENT IN THE MODERN LANGUAGES AND ENROLLMENT IN LATIN IN THE SECOND AND THIRD YEAR AND NUMBER OF STUDENTS DISCONTINUING THE COURSE AFTER THE SECOND YEAR.

<i>All Modern Languages</i>					
REGION	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN 2ND YEAR OF 3- AND 4-YEAR SCHOOLS	TOTAL LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN 3RD YEAR OF 4-YEAR SCHOOLS	TOTAL DISCONTINUANCE AFTER 2ND YEAR	PER CENT OF DISCONTINUANCE
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(3) (1)
I	*	20,681	10,630	10,051	
II		53,839	20,923	32,916	
III		4,024	1,596	2,428	
IV		14,360	4,964	9,396	
V		2,383	597	1,786	
VI		6,708	1,831	4,877	
VII		3,371	744	2,627	
VIII		9,677	3,562	6,115	
Total . .		(1) 115,043	(2) 44,847	(3) 70,196	61

Latin

I	354	9,314	4,691	4,623	
II	977	40,943	18,288	22,655	
III	112	3,160	999	2,161	
IV	205	10,160	3,159	7,001	
V	49	909	328	581	
VI	87	3,162	1,272	1,890	
VII	25	1,510	370	1,140	
VIII	78	2,803	692	2,111	
Total . .	1,887	(1) 71,961	(2) 29,799	(3) 42,162	58

* The total number of schools is the sum of the schools offering three or more years of French, German and Spanish, shown on Table 23. It is possible therefore, that some of the same schools might appear two or even three times in the total.

appear to provide very definite testimony that the failure of the majority of students to continue their modern language beyond the second year can not be ascribed primarily to lack of opportunity.

TABLE 25

REGULAR HIGH SCHOOLS IN TEN REPRESENTATIVE STATES WHICH OFFER A COURSE OF THREE YEARS OR LONGER IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH, WITH LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN THE SECOND YEAR AND THE THIRD YEAR AND NUMBER OF STUDENTS DISCONTINUING THE COURSE AFTER THE SECOND YEAR.

STATE	LANGUAGE	NO. OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN 2ND YEAR OF 3- AND 4-YEAR SCHOOLS (1)	TOTAL LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN 3RD YEAR OF 3- AND 4-YEAR SCHOOLS (2)	TOTAL DISCONTINUANCE AFTER 2ND YEAR (3)	PER CENT OF DISCONTINUANCE (3) (1)
Mass.	FRENCH	174	10,427	5,552	4,875	
N. Y.		298	18,827	7,319	11,508	
Va.		10	441	255	186	
Ill.		39	2,531	1,065	1,466	
Ohio		25	1,623	548	1,075	
Kan.*		1	22	8	14	
Mo.		14	720	199	521	
Texas		12	261	128	133	
Wash.		18	897	288	609	
Calif.		14	1,770	730	1,040	
Total		632	(1) 37,519	(2) 16,092	(3) 21,427	57
Mass.	GERMAN	12	399	119	280	
N. Y.		42	2,291	887	1,404	
Va.**		..	..	..	..	
Ill.		11	499	264	235	
Ohio **		..	..	..	..	
Kan.**		..	..	..	..	
Mo.**		..	..	..	..	
Texas **		..	..	..	..	
Wash.**		..	..	..	..	
Calif.**		..	..	..	..	
Total		54	3,189	1,270	1,919	60
Mass.	SPANISH	25	1,661	687	974	
N. Y.		73	10,054	3,920	6,134	
Va.		3	539	109	430	
Ill.		25	2,540	1,115	1,425	
Ohio		17	1,613	433	1,180	
Kan.		4	122	31	91	
Mo.		10	903	256	647	
Texas		59	4,559	1,271	3,288	
Wash.		10	949	143	806	
Calif.		138	7,907	2,832	5,075	
Total		364	(1) 30,847	(2) 10,797	(3) 20,050	65

* No four-year course in French.

** No three- or four-year course in German.

TABLE 26

REGULAR HIGH SCHOOLS IN TEN REPRESENTATIVE STATES WHICH OFFER A COURSE OF THREE YEARS OR LONGER IN A MODERN LANGUAGE AND LATIN, WITH COMBINED ENROLLMENT IN THE MODERN LANGUAGES AND ENROLLMENT IN LATIN IN THE SECOND AND THIRD YEAR AND NUMBER OF STUDENTS DISCONTINUING THE COURSE AFTER THE SECOND YEAR.

All Modern Languages

STATE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN 2ND YEAR OF 3RD- AND 4TH-YEAR SCHOOLS (1)	TOTAL LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN 3RD YEAR OF 3RD- AND 4TH-YEAR SCHOOLS (2)	TOTAL DISCONTINUANCE AFTER 2ND YEAR (3)	PER CENT OF DISCONTINUANCE (3) (1)
Mass.	*	12,487	6,358	6,129	
N. Y.		31,172	12,126	19,046	
Va.		980	364	616	
Ill.		5,570	2,444	3,126	
Ohio		3,236	981	2,255	
Kan.		144	39	105	
Mo.		1,623	455	1,168	
Texas		4,820	1,399	3,421	
Wash.		1,846	431	1,415	
Calif.		9,677	3,562	6,115	
Total		(1) 71,555	(2) 28,159	(3) 43,396	54

Latin

Mass.	171	6,430	3,217	3,217	
N. Y.	406	18,525	8,457	10,068	
Va.	112	3,160	999	2,161	
Ill.	170	8,222	2,801	5,421	
Ohio **		909	328	581	
Kan.	49	909	328	581	
Mo. **					
Texas	87	3,162	1,272	1,890	
Wash.	25	1,510	370	1,140	
Calif.	78	2,803	692	2,111	
Total	1,098	(1) 44,721	(2) 18,136	(3) 26,585	59

* The total number of schools is the sum of the schools offering three or more years of French, German and Spanish, shown on Table 25. It is possible, therefore, that some of the same schools might appear two or even three times in the total.

** The courses in Latin by years of study were not tabulated for Ohio and Missouri.

The foregoing tables make it clear that there are considerable numbers of modern language students who discontinue the subject at the end of two years, although their schools provide the facilities for a longer period of study — 70,196 of them, or 61 per cent of the second-year modern language enrollment in such schools (Tables 23 and 24). Thus the sum total

of those involved, even after allowing for those who leave school and after deducting those who enter college on the basis of two years' preparation, constitutes a large percentage of the total enrollment in modern language classes.¹ Few members of the profession would advocate the retention of the one-year course except under very special circumstances, but to feel justified in recommending the suppression of all two-year courses we should have to be very firmly convinced of the practical impossibility of achieving a worth-while objective in that length of time. At the same time, the profession must face squarely the possibility of even such extreme measures as this if no other road can be found out of the wilderness. We have reached the point of being able to demonstrate roughly but quite effectively that our principal objectives are not being attained in a disquietingly large number of cases. Our experimental analysis of the specific causes has not gone far enough for us to say just why this is and just what should be done to remedy the situation. If the period of study for all desirable students is lengthened to three years and if the students of lower ability are eliminated, conditions would, *ipso facto*, become much more favorable; but it is worth while to look further for other and less violent remedies, for there is sufficient evidence of the possibility of significant results from a two-year period to prevent our giving it up without further experiment.

A "reading" method. — Before taking up what really is a sixth possibility for the increase of reading experience, we may refer with profit to some interesting and pertinent passages in the report of the Committee of Twelve.

The Committee of Twelve. — In discussing the "phonetic" method,² the Committee recognizes that American school conditions do not allow of this procedure as practised in Germany unless more time is allotted to the modern language course. The report says:

"In order to gain the necessary time the foreign language must be taken up earlier, or some other high school topic must be sacrificed. A few things thoroughly and intelligently done make the best secondary discipline. As long, however, as our present conditions last it is clear that we must give up something. Until we are willing greatly to lengthen the time given to the linguistic part of our children's education, we shall have to renounce the idea of a full and well-rounded knowledge of French and German and, selecting the portion of the subject that appears to be most important for the greatest number, devote ourselves to the cultivation of

¹ The third-year modern language registration in public secondary schools is only 29 per cent of the second-year modern language enrollment. That is, 71 per cent of those in second-year modern language classes do not reappear in third-year modern language classes in the same type of school. The undetermined number of those who enter college with two years of modern language must be deducted from the 71 per cent. (Cf. above, Chapter I, p. 27, note 1.) As a drop of very cold comfort to modern language teachers, we may note that in 1887 schools having as much as three years of Latin or more, the third-year registration in Latin was only 42 per cent of the second-year registration in Latin, or a drop of 58 per cent from second to third year as compared with the 61 per cent drop in modern languages under similar circumstances. The total falling-off in the Latin registration from second to third years including all schools heard from, with a school population of 2,430,670, was 71 per cent, or almost exactly the same proportion as for the modern languages.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 22-29.

that restricted field. Considerations of this nature have led many thoughtful teachers to adopt a mode of instruction that we may call the 'reading method.' The title explains itself. The study of texts from the very beginning of the course, abundant practice in translation at sight, leading to the ability to read the foreign language with ease and without the interposition of English, are the principal features of this program. Grammar and composition are regarded merely as a help to reading, and are reduced to the essentials; sometimes accidence and syntax are first learned inductively. . . . Great importance is attached to the use of good English in the renderings. Pronunciation receives scant attention, there is little or no oral exercise" (pp. 28-29).

A few pages further the Committee discusses briefly the methods that seem appropriate for courses of different lengths. For children below the age of ten it suggests the "natural" combined with the "psychological"; for a course of six years beginning at the age of twelve, it thinks that a combination of the "psychological" and the "phonetic" with some modifications would serve best; for the four-year high school course it thinks that a similar procedure for the first year, tending to the "reading" method for the more advanced years, will yield the best results. "*For any shorter course,*" it adds (italics ours), "we should advise the 'reading method,' accompanied, however, by scientific training in pronunciation, drill in the rudiments of grammar, and a moderate amount of oral practice" (p. 35).

Two champions of increased reading. — In 1891 Professor Grandgent, then Director of Modern Languages in the Boston schools, published an article entitled, "The Teaching of French and German in our Public High Schools."¹ He admitted that grammar will not hold the attention of the pupil because of its dullness, and that we may expect to teach "only the essentials . . . and emphasize its utility and relieve its dullness by means of close association with interesting composition work and agreeable reading matter." He pronounced translation and reading as two significant phases of one activity, but adds "reading must begin by translation." Where the development of the reason is our chief aim, he advised:

"A course of carefully corrected translation, a maximum of grammar and composition, and comparatively little speaking. If, on the other hand, the end we have in view is the broadening of the mind and the cultivation of the taste, we shall have, perhaps, more translation and conversation and somewhat less writing and grammar; and we shall strive to train our pupils in such a manner that they can, before the end of three years, absorb thought directly through the foreign medium without the interposition of English. . . . Now refinement and taste are necessary factors of civilisation. . . . I am, therefore, inclined to say that a French or German course does not fulfil its true mission until it affords pupils at least an introduction to the best literature of the language they are learning."

While it would be manifestly unfair to demand that the author of these passages subscribe now to views expressed in 1891, his utterances, like the citations from the Committee of Twelve, illustrate two points. Both Professor Grandgent and the Committee of Twelve, of which he was a

¹ See *Methods of Teaching Modern Languages*, pp. 138-143.

member, recognize that modern language teachers have no right to be satisfied with their work unless their pupils, as a minimum of accomplishment, reach the point where they can read the foreign tongue. They also agree in their belief, a very wide-spread belief still, that only through extensive practice in translation can students develop the ability to read without translating. We shall recur again to the very significant view about method expressed by the Committee.

Another pioneer in the field of modern language teaching, the late Professor E. S. Joynes, gave utterance at about the same period to some opinions of considerable interest. In 1889 he read a paper before the Modern Language Association in which, after setting forth the difficulty, and the small utility for any large number of persons, of acquiring a speaking knowledge of a foreign tongue, and citing "the greatest good of the greatest number" as the chief criterion in fixing aims and methods, he declared:

"Now, it seems scarcely to need argument that for this 'greatest number' of all our modern language students in school or college 'the greatest good' that our teaching can confer is the power to read, with, so far as possible, the love of reading. . . . We do not read enough; it is not quality but quantity; not depth but range; not knowledge only, but the ease of practised habits that is . . . lacking in our results . . . we do not read enough, not nearly enough, to secure that comfortable at-homeness in the foreign atmosphere, which is necessary for the appreciation of style, for the enjoyment of literature, or for . . . the use of these languages as instruments of research, of culture, of power in after life."¹

He then remarks that more room must be made for reading, that other things must be subordinated. The first of these "other things" is grammar, the second is speaking, the third is written composition. His observations on the subject of grammar are quite as appropriate to the present situation as when they were uttered, and might almost be quoted as providing the background of several very recent experimental undertakings:

"The formal study of grammar cannot, of course, be wholly eliminated, but it should be reduced to a minimum. The grammar should be for the reading, not the reading for the grammar. Reading outside the grammar should be begun the earliest day possible . . . and the further accretion of grammatical knowledge should be made to crystallize gradually around easy, interesting and pleasurable reading. The formal learning of paradigms and rules may thus, I believe, be wholly omitted except in largest outlines. . . . One month of indispensable introduction I believe to be quite sufficient. After that . . . the grammar, like the dictionary, should be used as a book of reference rather than of formal study. . . . The reading thus early begun should be pushed more and more; the formal grammar more and more subordinated."

When he reaches the point of defining reading, Professor Joynes agrees with the authorities already cited in asserting that students must first read "for translation," both because it is necessarily the first step and because of its value as an exercise, and thus learn to read directly.

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-44 *passim*.

Effect of the report of the Committee of Twelve. — As far as the present discussion is concerned, the most significant element common to the three proposals cited is the thesis that a course of less than three years in length should concentrate on the development of reading ability, and that, consequently, to this end some readjustment of method and of content is necessary. Unfortunately, the Committee of Twelve, instead of developing its very enlightened conception of what a shorter course should be, and despite its express recognition of the fact that it should not "propose any arrangement which could be taken to imply that secondary instruction in French and German exists only for the sake of preparation for college" (p. 4), actually bent most of its energies to outlining the three courses of French and German ("elementary," "intermediate," "advanced") solely from the college point of view and as component parts of a single course. To be sure, it proposed standards of accomplishment for the two-year course: the ability "to read at sight a passage of very easy dialogue or of narrative prose" and "to read at sight easy French prose," but immediately added other standards: "to put into French (German) . . . English sentences taken from the language of everyday life or based upon the text given for translation, and to answer questions upon the rudiments of grammar as defined below" (pp. 46, 75). Then follows an enumeration of the grammatical topics with which the two-year student should be familiar.

Insistence upon Grammar. — Without stopping to discuss the details of this program, we may confidently assert that the Committee's outline of the "elementary" course in French and in German, with preparation for college as the immediate end, has, directly or indirectly, determined the content of the first two years in modern language ever since, both in kind and in amount. For German the report advised the reading of "from 75 to 100 pages of graduated texts from a reader" for first year, and "from 150 to 200 pages of literature in the form of easy stories and plays" for second year. The recommendations for French are much the same: 100 to 175 pages in first year; 250 to 400 pages of easy modern prose in second year. The actual averages in a considerable number of cases have already been given in the preceding chapter (p. 101), where they are found to be usually somewhat smaller than the amounts suggested by the Committee of Twelve. This fact is almost certainly due to the standards that are proposed by the Committee of Twelve as a proper preparation for continued work in college.

"The important thing, is . . . that the learner . . . should acquire facility in understanding and in using the language. . . . It is of small use to be able to state correctly the principle of adjective declension so long as the pupil, in applying the principle to a simple case, is obliged to stop and think, to recall his grammar. . . . The right forms must be so bred into the blood that they come naturally from tongue and pen. This, of course, requires an endless amount of repetition. . . . But the time spent on this elementary drill is well spent and tells for good

throughout the course. Teachers should not be in too great haste to get to reading good literature" (p. 57). "The great universals . . . (the regular and the common irregular verbs; negative and interrogative variations; the common use and meaning of moods and tenses; the personal pronouns and their position; the general principles governing the agreement of adjectives, pronouns and participles; the partitive constructions; the possessives, demonstratives, interrogatives and relatives; the most common adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions) should all be thoroughly understood by the end of the second year of high school study, and subsequent study should give considerable facility in using them" (p. 79).

These statements, while occurring, the first in the discussion of the German course, the second in the outline of the French, belong together. Taken in conjunction with the context in which they occur, they indicate clearly what, in the opinion of the Committee of Twelve, is the chief aim of the first two years: the acquisition of the ability to use readily, especially in written and spoken exercises, the most frequently encountered grammatical phenomena. This, in that Committee's view, is the essential preparation for the work to come, for only so may students expect to be able, at some more advanced stage, to read easily and understandingly, to write correctly, and to speak intelligibly, and to the unwearying practice necessary for the ready use of the "great universals," it would unhesitatingly dedicate the larger part of the class time during the first two years.

The effect upon Reading. — The profession at large, partly as a direct result of the recommendations of the Committee of Twelve operating through college entrance requirements and through the effect on the training of teachers, has accepted this point of view. Since it has proven necessary to limit the work of the course in some respect in order to make room for the grammatical requirement, teachers have preferred to read less than the suggested amount rather than lessen the emphasis on grammar.

The strong tendency toward adopting in modern language classrooms certain of the procedures of the Direct method has not brought about any essential quantitative changes. It has no doubt resulted in less emphasis on formal grammar as such, but the effort to develop through oral exercises an "active" control of grammatical usage and of a concrete vocabulary occupies the greater part of the teacher's attention in the classroom and not infrequently results in even less emphasis on reading during the first and second years than under the older dispensation. We have already seen (p. 101) how widespread is the conviction that the first year at least is a period for detailed and intensive study of a small amount of material. The limited amount of reading done in the second year testifies to the extent to which this point of view carries over. Whether one seeks the solution of an introduction to the languages on the basis of the principle enunciated by the Committee of Twelve, that the correct grammatical forms must be "so bred into the blood that they come naturally from tongue and pen,"

or of the principle of the Direct method that learning to speak the foreign language is the best means of getting the pupil interested and of inducing him in addition to read it and to write it,¹ exponents of both, while stoutly maintaining that reading is their aim, so fill up the available time with other types of exercises that attention to reading is virtually postponed, often until after the expiration of the student's period for study. Moreover, as has been previously observed, in almost none of the numerous course outlines examined during the progress of the present investigation has there appeared any hint that a course of study only two years long ought to differ in any respect, in content or in method, from a longer course, or that one should expect therefrom results that differ otherwise than in degree.²

Whatever a given printed list of objectives may propose, it may be confidently asserted that the first two years in nine courses out of ten are devoted chiefly to the kinds of practice that prepare primarily for correct writing and speaking in the foreign language, in the belief that only so may reading ability be developed and rendered durable.³ If it is true that this sort of preparation is indispensable, if students must be able to speak and to write as a necessary preliminary for reading, the situation that confronts the teachers of modern languages is indeed serious. As the enrollment inquiry shows, the overwhelming majority of those who begin a foreign language pursue it for only two years *at most*, and about one-third of the total modern language population of the country is found in schools that provide, at most, two years' instruction in modern languages. It is quite clear, therefore, that, as things are, most of our students have to acquire the ability to speak and to write and to read in two years. If they fail to do this, they must be satisfied with whatever indirect benefits may accrue from their modern language course. These, as has been pointed out, are not easy to measure and must for the present, therefore, rest largely on hypothesis.

¹ Schweitzer and Simonnot, *Méthodologie des langues vivantes*, Paris, 1921, p. 38.

² In fairness to the Committee of Twelve, it must be pointed out that teachers in general appear to think that even the moderate amount of reading suggested in the Report is too great. At least that is one interpretation of the fact that considerable numbers of secondary and college teachers allege "too much ground to cover" as an obstacle in the way of attaining their objectives.

³ Handschin states the case thus (*op. cit.*, pp. 149-150): "Strictly speaking one needs in reading only a passive vocabulary. . . . If speaking, writing and the discipline derived from grammatical study were not set up as aims in our courses, then we should not need to base exercises on our reading texts other than such as bring out a clear understanding of the content. . . . The sort of drills we prevalently base upon our intensive reading is clearly intended to aid in hearing, . . . speaking and writing, and not reading *per se* at all. Even oral rendition is, primarily, used as an exercise auxiliary to pronunciation and speaking, and not for getting the sense of the passage. . . . These exercises in hearing, speaking and writing serve to make the comprehension of matter read more immediate and more clear. In psychological terms, these exercises provide for added images of words (aural, graphic, motor), and hence make for greater familiarity with words and for a fuller apperception of later perceptions. They also make it possible later to treat the reading lesson entirely by means of the foreign language, which serves further to keep in use and to develop the aural, oral, and graphic centers."

The alternative he indicates as being "mere reading and translating as the old school practised it." Is this really the other horn of the dilemma?

Other elements in the situation. — It would be an exaggeration to ascribe the present very unsatisfactory degree of performance to which large numbers of our modern language students seem to be limited exclusively to the fact that we, as a profession, labor chiefly to develop during the first two years abilities that can rarely be developed in that length of time to any appreciable degree. Were this our only, or even our chief, handicap, we should indeed be lucky. The situation is complicated by too many other important factors that are quite evident, and, no doubt, by others that for the time being escape our analysis. Reference has already been made to the causes to which teachers attribute, at least in part, their failure to satisfy themselves. Students without linguistic ability; others who lack interest or the necessary maturity (maturity for what? to learn grammar?) or who spend an undue amount of energy on "activities"; teachers who have to carry unduly heavy loads of teaching hours and of administrative details; school authorities who are unsympathetic or give no thought to securing competent language teachers; classes that are made up of disparate elements from the point of view of language attainment and that can not be redistributed because of administrative difficulties; course requirements of various kinds that hamper teachers in their work; the lack of coördinating influences, such as should be provided by some plan for general supervision of modern language work; the large number of teachers who are inadequately prepared in the subject matter or who lack first-hand contact with the foreign country, or who are deficient in the professional equipment and experience that would aid them to define the aims of their courses and to select the means by which these may be attained, — such, in the opinion of many of our colleagues, is the formidable array of obstacles by which we are confronted. We should be most happy and fortunate as a profession if, in place of this hydra-headed foe in our pathway, we had to face only one, for experimentation would then be a perfectly straightforward matter of developing the proper technique; we could then actually expect to ascertain the relative rates of progress under differing conditions of course-content and of method, and thus to supply evidence for or against any accepted or suggested procedure.

Conditions must be faced as they are, and if we may assume that there is a direct connection between aims, course-content and results, it is not unreasonable to inquire whether the failure of so many of our students to learn to read is not largely due to the fact that they read too little to acquire facility in reading, and whether they fail to get the necessary practice in reading because the chief effort of the class goes into doing the "other things" referred to by Professor Joynes.

Experimental evidence on the development of reading ability. — The conclusion appears to be inevitable. If the reading objective is to be realized in the maximum period which approximately 85 per cent of secondary

school language pupils devote to the subject, we must consider whether it may not be worth while to reverse the emphasis and to place in the background some of the things to which our effort in the first two years is now largely devoted. Such are: the learning and recitation of forms; the study of a considerable list of syntactic phenomena considered essential for speaking and writing and the practice in composition thought necessary to render these phenomena automatically usable; the learning of a considerable stock of words and of idioms that belong almost exclusively to objects and actions in the classroom, and the very intensive study of brief daily assignments in reading.¹

The outcome of such a decision could not be more succinctly expressed than by one sentence, already quoted, from the Committee of Twelve: "For any shorter course we should advise the 'reading method,' accompanied, however, by *scientific training in pronunciation*, drill in the rudiments of grammar, and a *moderate amount of oral practice*" (italics not in the original).² The difficulty arises, however, when we attempt to make this fairly specific statement more specific still: to enumerate the "rudiments of grammar" and the extent of the drill therein, to specify the nature and the amount of the "reading" that is to be done, — for, as we have seen, the Committee of Twelve had in mind *translate*, certainly for a considerable period, when it said *read* — and to define the "moderate" amount of oral practice and its *raison d'être* in the course. Only if abundant experimental evidence were at hand could one hope to solve these problems. Since only a limited amount of data is available, we must content ourselves with assembling the testimony that is pertinent and suggesting the hypothesis to which it appears to point.

We have learned that comparatively few teachers place a high estimate on the reading ability of their pupils at the end of two years; we know further from a country-wide sampling that comparatively few students at this level have developed much ability to read and to write, or even to apply the "rudiments of grammar" as enumerated by the Committee of Twelve. This is the negative evidence. On the positive side the studies by Buswell with elementary school, high school and college students, by

¹ Rice, in the study already referred to, gives evidence to show that the reading scores on the Iowa Placement tests in French and in Spanish were noticeably higher in 30 classes in which grammar had not been stressed than in an equal number of classes in which more time had been devoted to grammar. The correlation between scores on grammar and on reading is lower in the beginning but tends to increase at more advanced stages. His conclusion from a large amount of data is: "that those students who are to study a language for two years (should) concentrate on the acquisition of a large vocabulary and a ready comprehension rather than upon a systematic study of the grammar of the language."

² Cf. the similar view expressed by the Committee on Foreign Languages in the Junior High School: "With less time available the objectives must be restricted in such a way as to keep the most important elements. As courses are shortened, oral work must occupy a diminishing portion of our time; we must renounce the objective of self-expression in the foreign language and concentrate on the ability to comprehend the thought expressed by the printed page. . . . Even . . . when power to read understandingly is made the great objective of the study (*sic*), a certain amount of oral work is found to be a most effective means for attaining the end desired." *Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, p. 312.

C. E. Young and colleagues and by O. F. Bond and colleagues¹ with college students, and by Michael West with Bengali children, give reason for believing that the yield in reading ability can be increased if we follow more nearly a procedure resembling that suggested by the "reading method" of the Committee of Twelve as *interpreted in terms of today*, than if we adhere to the anomalous and illogical procedure for the course of the first two years that now prevails.

Buswell's experiment: the advantages of "direct" reading. — Professor Buswell undertook his investigation at the request of the Committee on Investigation of the Study in order to examine the ways in which students read a foreign language. He hoped, specifically, to throw light upon the optimum age for beginning, on the rate and amount of progress made during the first two years, on the effects of different methods, and on any essential differences that may obtain in the reading of different languages. The means employed and the technique followed have long been recognized by investigators of reading as yielding objective and comparable results. By means of an ingenious apparatus, photographs were made at regular intervals throughout an academic year of the eye-movements of persons reading passages of known difficulty in English and in the foreign languages. The number and the duration of the fixations and the character of the recessive movements were noted and studied. Comprehension of the passages read was tested by questions on content. As this procedure has been followed in numerous studies of reading in the vernacular, the skilled investigator is able to make comparisons and draw conclusions in the light of a good deal of well-established data. For further details regarding the apparatus used and the technique employed readers must refer to the text of the monograph.²

The subjects utilized in the investigation numbered 192, drawn chiefly from the elementary school, the high school and the college levels. A few adults, classed as expert readers, were also studied and their records used as a basis of comparison, for one of the real questions in rating the reading ability of an individual in a foreign language is: How does it compare in speed and in comprehension with the reading of a person who is admittedly a mature reader?

One of the most interesting comparisons made in this experiment is the "Comparison of direct and indirect methods of teaching in high school classes" (pp. 62-78). A first- and a second-year class in French from two schools and several groups of Latin pupils from various schools in which

¹ "Reading for Language Power," *Modern Language Journal*, X (1926), 411-426; "Organization and Use of a Reading Collection," *ibid.*, IX (1925), 483-488. See also the articles in "Supplementary Educational Monographs," University of Chicago Press, No. 26 (1925), 177-200, for a detailed presentation by the same author. See also two articles by Peter Hagboldt: "Reading and its Influence on other Objectives," *Jahrbuch für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik*, Milwaukee, 1924, 1-11; "Experimenting with First Year College German," *Modern Language Journal*, IX (1925), 293 ff.

² See the review by R. D. Cole in *Modern Language Journal*, XIII (1928), 569-573.

different methods were employed were compared with respect to their reading power as disclosed by their eye-movements in reading and by their ability to understand what they had read. It turned out, as one might readily guess, that far more is involved in such a comparison than merely the differences in classroom technique. In addition to method, as will soon become evident, there are involved also other deciding factors, such as general school conditions, the background of pupils, the efficiency and spirit of teachers, and the amount of reading experience secured by the pupils.

Before reproducing the conclusions with respect to method which Professor Buswell reached as the result of this part of his inquiry, — and the word “method” must evidently be construed in this connection sufficiently broadly to embrace all the elements suggested above, — it will be well to give some information with regard to the content of the courses and the procedure followed in the various schools.

The pupils from School A,¹ who proved to have made greater progress in reading ability than those from School B, had worked under unusually favorable conditions from the standpoint of instruction and general school conditions. The first-year group studied, first, in class *Première Année de Français* by Bovée and the *French Reader for Beginners* by Wooley and Bourdin. Reading in the latter work was begun two months after the first class meeting. During the year several books were read in class, either aloud by the teacher or the pupils, or silently by the pupils. The latter were expected to raise their hands and to ask questions when they did not understand, and the teacher commented on various passages as the reading proceeded. The texts so covered were, in addition to the two named above, *Petits Contes de France* (Méras and Roth), *Premier Livre* (Méras — a simplified version of *Sans Famille*), *La Tâche du Petit Pierre*, *L'Abbé Constantin*, *Three French Comedies*, *Les Trois Mousquetaires*. Pupils were also able to draw books for private reading.

The “direct reading” classroom procedure was in accord with that outlined by H. C. Morrison,² a procedure based on the belief that a first stage of abundant contact with suitable reading matter in the foreign language, accompanied by practice in recognizing the commonest grammatical phenomena essential for reading with comprehension, may be made to yield most quickly a useful reading knowledge. The results in the case, as reported by Buswell, tend to corroborate this view; but it is only fair to add that the instructor in charge, who was not personally a convert to that type of procedure, proved to his own satisfaction during the following autumn that this first-year group was, in its second year, below the school standard. He attributed the deficiency especially to the lack of oral practice and to the consequent failure to study vocabulary and the com-

¹ Buswell, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-70.

² *Op. cit.*, Chapter XXV.

monest grammatical usage as intensively as is, in his judgment, necessary to make durable impressions. If correct, this is an important observation, and steps should be taken to verify it experimentally in more conclusive fashion.

The second-year group from this school had been taught during its first year by a skilful teacher in accordance with a well organized and clearly defined Direct method technique as exemplified in Bovée's *Première Année de Français*, and this technique was followed up, *mutatis mutandis*, in the second year. It is of capital importance to note, however, that both during the preceding first year and in the second year this class read considerably more French than is done in most cases, as will appear in the following enumeration, which states the approximate number of pages that were read in each work: First-Year Reading, 1924-25, — *French Reader for Beginners*, Wooley and Bourdin, 75 pages; *Le Premier Livre*, Méras, 80 pages; *Petits Contes de France*, Méras and Roth, 80 pages; *L'Eté de la Saint-Martin*, 38 pages; total 273 pages. In addition the class used the French textbook mentioned above, which would yield at least 225 pages additional, and makes a total of about 500 pages of French read in the first year. Second-Year Reading, 1925-26, — Class Reading: *Three French Comedies*, 50 pages; *La Tâche du Petit Pierre*, 80 pages; *Le Voyage de M. Perrichon*, 80 pages; *L'Abbé Constantin*, 150 pages. Extensive Reading: *Second livre*, Méras, 150 pages; *Le Petit Chose*, 90 pages; *Monte Cristo*, 130 pages; *La Poudre aux yeux*, 90 pages. Total, 820 pages. Outside Reading: *Le Roi des montagnes*, *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, *Gil Blas*, *Vingt ans après*.

It is clear that by the end of the second year every member of this class had read at least 1200 pages of French, which is far above the average. Had it been taught throughout the two years by the direct reading procedure used in the beginners' class of 1925-26, the total amount of reading would have been greater, but we have no way of knowing definitely whether the general results would have been more satisfactory, or, as the instructor in charge thought they would be, less satisfactory.

The first-year class was conducted by a direct reading technique with greatly reduced emphasis on oral reworking of the vocabulary and of the elements of sentence structure according to the usual Direct method procedure. The instructor was trying for the first time and distinctly under protest a procedure unfamiliar and unsympathetic to him. On the other hand, he was teaching the other class for the second year in conformity with a technique for which he had great enthusiasm and in the practice of which he had developed unusual skill. Obviously the relative merits of the two procedures could not be fairly tested under these circumstances, but it is essential to remark again that in both cases the reading experience of the students was much larger in school A than in school B, and that in

the case of both classes in the former school less attention was paid to formal grammar and very much more to establishing a direct connection between the sounds and the written symbols of the French language and the meanings for which they stand.

In the classes from school B,¹ the first year had been spent on Fraser and Squair's *French Grammar*, Part I, a part of the class time being devoted to the study of pronunciation. During the second year the class had read *Le Voyage de M. Perrichon* and one other text of a similar difficulty. About one-third of the class time was devoted to reading French aloud and the rest chiefly to translating into English portions of the assignment. Questions on the text were asked and answered in French. There was no practice designed specifically to develop direct reading habits.

In the Latin classes of the University High School, conducted according to the Morrison principles, there was no formal grammatical study of forms and syntax during the first year.² All such material was presented through the reading, which was written on the board or read aloud to the class. No tense or case or rule was named nor were form endings given separately, but each new form and each new word was given, so that pupils could comprehend them through the context and in proportion as they did comprehend. Pupils were encouraged to write stories in Latin utilizing the vocabulary, but conformity to grammatical usage was not a prerequisite. The Latin text was read aloud by the pupils and the teacher read aloud to train the ear.

On a basis of 35 lines to the page, Latin I covered 169 pages in connected form, consisting of easy stories. Latin II read 81 pages, stories from Roman history, plays and the required Caesar.

The conclusions which Buswell reached are summed up in the following quotations:

"Teachers of both modern and classic languages have inherited a method of teaching which lays emphasis upon language structure and translation. The translation under this method was usually carried on with such a degree of analytical study that the process can best be described as one of deciphering. The Direct method of teaching represents a decided break from this older emphasis upon analysis and substitutes in its place an emphasis upon the type of mental activity which when applied to the vernacular is called reading. The psychological distinction between deciphering and reading can scarcely be overemphasized. The difference is clear-cut. When students read they are rapidly fusing the word symbols into consecutive thought units with no consideration of the words as such. It is only this process of comprehending meaning that can properly be designated as reading.

¹ This statement is based on information supplied by the teacher in charge. It is only fair to note that general teaching conditions in school A were more favorable to good results than in school B, entirely aside from the question of method. This is but one example of the great difficulty one finds in eliminating all variables but the one to be studied.

² G. T. Buswell, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-78.

"Students taught by a direct method¹ attain in two years' study of a foreign language those fundamental habits which are characteristic of the person who reads. Students taught French by an indirect method attain these mature characteristics of reading in a much less degree. Students taught Latin by the indirect method exhibit these characteristics of reading in no degree at all; rather they exhibit in marked fashion the characteristics of the person who deciphers.

"When the objective of teaching a foreign language is ability to read, a perfectly clear-cut choice of method is possible. The Direct method produces desirable reading habits; the translation method does not. This seems to be equally true regardless of the type of language — as applicable to Latin as to French."

* * * * *

"The results secured in this investigation indicate that the middle half of a class either in high school or college does not, in two years' time, reach the level of final maturity in reading. Certain individuals in the groups studied did reach this degree of maturity at the end of two years, and in a very few cases, at the end of only one year. . . . However, the reading habits of the groups as a whole fall below those of the group of expert or mature readers by an amount which probably represents about a year of additional study, judging from the curves of progress which have been shown.

"When the writer refers to the habits of the expert group, he uses the word 'expert' only in contrast to the groups of students. The expert groups are expert only in the sense that they have made a complete adaptation to the demands of reading ordinary material. They are expert in the sense in which a fifth-grade pupil is expert in reading Selection I in English, — he reads it rapidly and comprehends completely the meaning. Therefore, it is reasonable to set up as a goal in reading the type of adjustments made by the expert groups in this study. For the subjects used in this investigation, this degree of maturity was seldom reached in two years' time. This precipitates the question as to whether by a more careful selection of students and possible further revision of methods of teaching this goal might still be reached in two years. There are certain rather strong reasons which suggest that this would be entirely possible, providing foreign-language teachers deem it desirable to attempt such an objective in two years' time" (pp. 93-95).

It seems unnecessary to comment further on these conclusions except to draw again to the reader's attention the fact that the term "method" must be construed here in no narrow sense, or, to put the matter in another way, that considerable reading experience must be acquired in order that one may be able to read. It appears also that the acquisition of considerable reading experience in a comparatively short period is practicable only when pupils are led to read and to understand the text directly.

The Iowa experiments in teaching college students to read French. — Professor Young's first experiment, conducted by him and by Professor Vander Beke at the State University of Iowa in 1925-26, had as its purpose to ascertain whether a class of 28 second-year college students of French would make relatively greater progress in reading power if they were frequently tested for deficiencies and if suitable remedial measures were taken.² As

¹ It is pointed out in the preface of Buswell's book that he means by this term the elimination of translation and the concentration on comprehending directly the meaning of the text. It is neither "*la méthode directe*" of Schweitzer nor the "Reform Method" of Walter and could with greater propriety be characterized by the term, "Direct Principle" rather than "Direct Method." Cf. West, *Bilingualism*, p. 251, *infra*, p. 156.

² As the experiment has been reported in some detail in the *Modern Language Journal* (XI, pp. 25-31), we mention here only the salient points.

tested at the opening of the semester by the Iowa Placement Test FT-1, Revised, the experimental class stood exactly at the 50 percentile mark. Four of the six control classes were higher, two of them attaining the 77 percentile. Only two of the control sections stood lower than the experimental group.

The work with the experimental class emphasized knowledge of vocabulary, of idioms and of verb forms, ability to pronounce and to understand written and spoken French.

a. The students were tested for knowledge of the first 500 words in the Henmon French word list and were required to study those that they missed. A review test was given of the 92 words missed by more than half the class. Then the second 500 words of the Henmon list were treated in the same way. According to the scores, there was reason to believe that fewer than 25 of the first 1000 words were unfamiliar to the class at the end of this testing and practice period.

b. The class was given a number of definitions and of rules bearing on the relationship between spelling and sound, and was practised in the application of this material to oral reading.

c. Before a reading text was begun, idiom lists were made up from it for practice and for testing purposes, as in the case of vocabulary.

d. The instructor read aloud to train the ear of the class and required the oral reading of prepared passages.

e. Students were practised in giving the English equivalents of the forms of French verbs written on the board or on flash cards.

f. The class read 360 pages of French prose in class and an average of 230 outside. This slightly exceeds the average amount read by the whole group.

A uniform objective test was administered to the whole second-year group at the end of the semester. The experimental section attained the 70 percentile on this test with relation to the other sections, a relative gain of 20 percentile ranks. Only one of the control sections gained at all — 3 percentile ranks — and only one of the two best control sections attained as high a percentile rank as the experimental section.

The outcome of a continuance of the experiment through a second semester yielded similar results, although unavoidable shifts of students altered somewhat the character of the various sections. The experimental section attained a score slightly above the 50 percentile point on the Iowa Placement Test, FT-1, Revised. The third 500 words of the Henmon list were treated as the first 1000 had been during the first semester and special attention was given to all words of the first 1500 that might confuse by their resemblances in spelling.

The work in pronunciation, verb forms, idioms, reading and aural practice followed the same procedure as during the first semester. The average

number of pages read in class and outside by the experimental group was 921, which made a total of 1521 pages for the year.

All the sections were tested at the end of the second semester and, as before, the experimental group proved to have made markedly the greatest relative progress of all second-year groups — a gain this time of 23 percentile ranks as compared with its standing on the FT-1 Placement Test at the opening of the semester. Again the experimental section made the greatest relative progress. The text of the full report is accompanied by specimens of the tests used.¹

The authors conclude:

"Whatever increase in attainment was shown by the experimental group over the other students . . . is due to the manner in which the class was conducted. . . . At the beginning of the semester four sections in the department had higher average ability than the experimental group. At the end of the semester the experimental group attained the highest mean score of all sections, increasing its relative achievement during one semester by 40 per cent.

"The students of the experimental group did much more work than the students of the other sections. Their assignments were larger, their voluntary extensive reading covered much more material, but they liked the work. . . . They knew at all times how they were progressing and what goal they were expected to attain. . . ."

It may be objected that this experiment bears rather on the choice of classroom technique than on the question of course-content. If so, it is fair to inquire whether the two can be sharply separated. In fact, the Young experiment assumed reading ability as the leading objective. It used a technique that involves (a) pre-testing on a basis of the vocabulary, the idioms and the verb forms that are to be encountered in the reading text; (b) teaching and study of the undigested elements and retesting; (c) practice in reading in somewhat larger quantities than the normal class; (d) final testing on an objective basis. Finally it demonstrated that such a procedure resulted in more reading and in greater relative progress in all the abilities stressed than did the varied and less sharply formulated methods by which the control sections were taught with the same general ends in view.

There might be considerable difference of opinion in regard to certain aspects of the procedure followed by Professor Young. His insistence on testing the understanding of verb forms and reading matter through translation is, for example, quite at variance with the procedures suggested in the present discussion. But such features are variables rather than essentials of a general procedure, which might be adapted to any stage of a course in a modern language.

In the second experiment conducted by Professor Young² practically the same technique was applied to classes in first-year French. This time

¹ See Appendix, p. 291.

² See "An Experiment in First Year French," by Charles E. Young and Josephine M. Daus, *Modern Language Journal*, Vol. XII (1928), 356-364.

(1926-27) there were during the first semester six experimental sections containing 152 students and six control sections containing 142 students. The Iowa Foreign Language Aptitude Test was administered to the twelve classes. The median scores obtained showed some initial superiority in favor of the experimental group (71.79 to 66.13), which in terms of percentile ranks yields a mean percentile rank of 44 for the control sections and 55 for the experimental.

A specially prepared summary of grammar was presented to the experimental sections during the first semester and reviewed during the second. Pronunciation was taught by means of rules for spelling equivalents, definitions, and by oral reading. The instructor read aloud and asked questions in French to train the ear. Reading was begun the second week, and controlled at first by translation and then by questions on the content, now in French, now in English, which were answered in English. The first 500 words in the Henmon list were studied during the first semester and the second 500 during the second semester. Lists of idioms from each reading text were prepared and studied before beginning the text. Carefully prepared tests of an objective nature were given the experimental sections at the completion of each unit of the work, and at the end of each semester all the first-year classes took the same examination except for very slight differences determined by the somewhat different nature of the ground covered by the two types of sections, for the control groups were taught in the way usually followed by the instructors in charge. As a result of the first semester test, the experimental sections had a mean percentile rank of 58 as compared with 34 for the control classes, and only one control section was in a relatively higher place than any experimental section. At the end of the second semester there were 268 students evenly divided between the control and the experimental groups. The mean score of the experimental sections on a uniform final achievement test, administered as above, was 36 score points above the mean of the control groups, a greater relative superiority than at the end of the first semester. The experimental groups read somewhat more than the control groups and were more inclined to read for themselves in addition to class requirements.

In all the details of test construction and administration in both experiments Professor Young had the help of an assistant trained in statistical methods.

The Missouri experiment: the "reading" method vs. the "grammar" method. — An experiment carried on in the University of Missouri high school and reported by Mamie M. Clarahan yielded evidence of much the same kind.¹ Five sections of first-year German provided the subjects. Three were conducted according to a "reading" method; two according to a

¹ "An Experimental Study of Methods of Teaching High School German," *University of Missouri Bulletin, Ed. Series*, Vol. I, No. 6, 1913, 32 pages.

"grammar" method. The sectioning was done at random. In the reading sections work began at once with reading easy German stories. Grammatical facts were given the students by the teacher as they were encountered. In the spring the reading sections spent six weeks on an intensive study of grammar, taking up the material in the order in which it had presented itself in the reading: Nouns, adjectives, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, verbs, modals, voice, subjunctive. Word order had been studied in every lesson.

The grammar sections read 81 pages of Guerber's *Märchen und Erzählungen*; the reading sections read about 230 pages of similar material. On a uniform grammar test, in April, the reading sections made a better showing, despite the fact that it was their first experience in translating English into German. The classes were tested in May for oral reading ability (pronunciation and expression) by an instructor who did not know to which sections the individuals belonged. In this respect and in ability to understand the spoken word the reading sections proved to be superior to the others. Miss Clarahan summarizes: "It may be concluded . . . that so far as the aims regarding grammar, pronunciation and reading are concerned, the reading method, as used, has proved decidedly the better."

As a good deal more oral work was done in the reading sections — reading aloud, hearing the instructor read, replying to questions in German, etc. — it is not surprising that they excelled in this part of the work. Is it any more surprising that their larger reading experience enabled them to read better? It is somewhat remarkable, however, that their grammar attainment should also be superior.

*West's experiment: teaching Bengali children to read English.*¹ — West's monograph was the result of an effort to ascertain how Bengali children may best learn how to read English. More generally it represents an attempt "to discover a means of producing silent reading ability in a foreign language, and of doing this with the minimum expenditure of time and effort on anything else."

The author determined by means of standardized tests that the English reading vocabulary of Bengali children of sixteen who had studied some English was equal to that of English children of nine and a half. He concluded that the Bengali boys must learn to understand the words of maximum frequency in order to bring their vocabulary to the point where they should be able to read English texts of their own level of maturity. In order to supply suitable practice material he rewrote certain stories

¹ Michael West, *Bilingualism*. Government of India. Calcutta, 1926. Occasional Reports, No. 13. 354 pages, 91 tables, 10 diagrams, 6 graphs. Professor West is principal of the Teachers Training College of Dacca. The experiment was conducted in high school and in "Intermediate College" classes with Bengali pupils ranging from 9 years to 18 years, chronological age. See his volume, pp. 200, 233, 257. This is the most comprehensive and the most significant contribution that has so far been made available on the problem of teaching young persons to read a foreign language.

from current readers, dropping out the less frequent words and introducing others of higher frequency as determined by the Thorndike word lists (Chapter 8). The experimental groups showed in seventeen weeks a gain in reading power of two and one-half years over their initial ability (Chapter 9). At the end of 95 days, more than 50 per cent of the class were reading directly from the text. As the result of a warning against translation, this fraction was increased to 84 per cent.

The author concludes that it is possible in one year to give to 40 per cent and in two years to 80 per cent of an average class of Bengali boys "such reading ability in English as constitutes a permanent, usable and improvable possession" (Chapter 10).

The experiment is set forth in detail in the volume in question and appears to have been carried through with great care. Corroboration of the results by other investigators would naturally be necessary before we can accept them as being established integrally. Moreover, West appears to have left out of account an auxiliary that is esteemed very highly by many modern language teachers: hearing and speaking the new linguistic material, not primarily for the purpose of using it in conversation but as an aid in impressing it upon the memory.

However, the positive elements of his experiment are of distinct importance. These may be enumerated as follows:

1. One of the chief difficulties in the choice of reading material is that foreign texts that are readily comprehensible to students of high school age are below their mental level in subject matter and in treatment.

2. The chief obstacle to the comprehension of material of suitable maturity lies in the unfamiliar vocabulary.

3. Economy of effort demands that reading texts should provide practice in understanding the commonest words in the foreign language, should introduce new words at a reasonable rate and should provide for the repetition of familiar terms as well as for the introduction of new ones.

4. Suitable books and stories can be adapted to class needs by rewriting them on the basis of word counts and idiom counts.

5. It is possible to provide specific practice in comprehending material written in a foreign language and to develop silent reading ability thereby. Among the devices for doing this are: (a) asking questions about the content of the material read ("After-questions"), (b) providing beforehand questions that are to be answered by learners after the reading of a passage ("Before-questions"), (c) urging students to avoid translation and to endeavor deliberately to understand what they read by ideas and thought units rather than by word after word, and (d) dividing the reading text into suitable units, each provided with appropriate questions.¹

¹ For a detailed exposition of training in silent reading in the vernacular, see F. D. Brooks, *The Applied Psychology of Reading*, D. Appleton, 1926, Chapter XIV; J. A. O'Brien, *Reading: Its Psychology and Pedagogy*, Century Co., 1926, Chapters X, XI.

6. Only by pre-testing and after-testing on some standard basis can we make any safe inferences concerning the yield from a given procedure.

7. The equipment needed for reproductive purposes and for parsing the various elements of a sentence is not an essential condition to the ability to read silently and comprehendingly.¹

8. Exercises in speaking and writing the foreign language have their value, but they need not figure prominently in a course designed primarily to develop reading ability, in which little emphasis is laid on the active use of the language in speaking and in writing.²

9. It is possible in two years to develop the reading attitude in the case of the large majority of a class of average students.

It is likely that in learning to read a more highly analytical language than English, more attention would have to be paid to recognizing verb forms and pronouns than the West report would suggest. One would need also to consider more than West does the value of the study of vocabulary and idiom through hearing the language read and spoken. At the same time the results of this experiment serve to strengthen the assumption of the presence of similar elements in the process of learning to read in the vernacular and in a modern language and, like the Young experiment, exemplify the value of a procedure that is directed constantly toward the main objective and that utilizes definite remedial measures when the evidence of testing discloses that the road to progress is obstructed.³

The amount of reading and progress in reading ability. — How much reading shall our classes do in the first year? how much in the second? No one knows. College teachers estimate that from five to six semester-hours are enough to enable students to develop reading ability, and this appears to imply, at most, about 220 pages of French or of Spanish, and about 150 of German.⁴ While a few persons may attain a satisfactory reading ability after no more practice than is now customary, — there is a case of a college student who, before completing six semester-hours, read with enjoyment the unabridged version of *Les Misérables* — most students need two, three, perhaps four or five times as much to produce a like result.

¹ This is a generally accepted fact. Cf. West, *op. cit.*, p. 116, and the citation from Jespersen: "The passive or receptive knowledge of a language always goes far beyond the active or reproductive." *Language*, Holt and Co., 1922, p. 125.

² The argument that such a separation of the language bonds is logical rather than psychological is not, according to West, supported by theory or by fact. "The existence of reading ability apart from speech ability, or greatly disproportionate to speech ability, is a comparatively common phenomenon." (*op. cit.*, p. 134).

³ James Burton Tharp and Eloise Murray report an interesting experiment with two reading sections of college students: "Grammarless Reading of Foreign Languages," *Modern Language Journal*, XII, pp. 385-390. In this experiment, as in those of Professor Young, translation played a prominent rôle and all testing was carefully controlled. The progress in reading was noteworthy, as was the small attainment in grammar.

⁴ Hugh Stuart, *Training of Modern Language Teachers*. Teachers College, Columbia University, "Contributions to Education," No. 256 (1927), p. 17.

Procedure directed toward increase of progress in reading ability. — It is probably impossible, if we adhere to our present practice of checking up in class the comprehension of each word and the classification of most syntactic phenomena, even to double the amount now read. Shall translation as an exercise in English and to test the student's ability to render the full value of a foreign text, grammatically, lexicologically, and stylistically, play a considerable part in the work of the first two years? Not if the goal is to read the foreign language directly. The small amount of translation that is called for in order to make clear a doubtful phrase or sentence or, when the time has come, to illustrate an idiom or a point in grammar, should be regarded by students and by teacher alike as having served its purpose when this has been done. The task of the student is to read and to understand without translating.

The teacher must select texts of appropriate content and of steadily widening vocabulary, and must construct word lists proceeding from the more frequent to the less common, so that recognition vocabulary may grow and may be tested for growth. The existence of the vocabulary studies already referred to makes this no very difficult task. In the first year the student should learn to read with moderate ease, without much attention to grammatical analysis, stories, books, magazines, and other material which would interest him if it were in English, and should have enough practice in analysis to see that a knowledge of certain things in grammar gives often a sense of security in reading and is essential for self-expression, oral and written. If this principle be accepted, not until the second or third year will he ordinarily be required to study grammar formally and intensively and to apply it in written exercises in which the objective is self-expression in grammatically correct form.

As it has already been noted such a procedure is in direct opposition to the views of the considerable number of secondary school teachers consulted on the question of extensive reading versus intensive formal drill on a small amount of material. About 90 per cent of the 566 voting favored the latter procedure for the first year, whereas about 63 per cent — the relative difference may be of some importance — took the same position in regard to second-year work. College teachers express practically the same judgment for the first year, but incline to less intensive work in the second year.

For the consolation of those who think that the kind of reading done according to this proposal would necessarily be a negation of the ideals of the profession, we may quote again from the Committee of Twelve:

"Since the general aim in the elementary course is to learn to read very easy narrative prose at sight and not to learn to translate any specified texts . . . it is evident that considerable practice should be given in sight reading. Teachers sometimes object to this exercise on the ground that it encourages guess work and

inaccuracy. But the objection is not valid. The object of the exercise is to increase the learner's vocabulary, to make him feel that he can read German that he has not previously studied and to give him facility in such reading. There is not the slightest objection to his guessing at the meaning of a new word. *All our reading is largely a process of divination, and the better we can divine from the context, the better we can read*" (pp. 68-69; italics not in original).¹

It must be added, in all candor, that by "sight reading" the Committee means sight translation, in which errors may be corrected by the teacher, whereas in the present discussion the term signifies what is technically called *silent reading*, as opposed to *oral reading* or to translation into the vernacular.

Testimony from psychologists on reading silently for content. — In this connection it may be profitable to consider the views on reading in the vernacular that have been developed by psychologists as the outcome of experimental work, particularly in connection with teaching children to read, for it appears highly probable that the process of learning to read in a foreign language has many points of similarity with learning to read the vernacular.² G. T. Buswell, in a monograph entitled *Fundamental Reading Habits*,³ points out that "maturity in interpreting words in their relations involves ability to fuse a number of words . . . in the order in which they occur into a single thought whole. . . . Mature reading consists of fusing words into thought units, with respect primarily to interpretation of meaning." In another study of the same general type⁴ by C. H. Judd and G. T. Buswell are a number of statements that are pertinent to this discussion:

"A printed page turns out to be . . . a source of a mass of impressions which the active mind begins to organize and arrange with reference to some patterns which it is trained to work out. If the mind is fitting together the impressions so as to bring into high relief grammatical distinctions, the grouping of words and the distribution of emphasis will be according to one pattern. If the mind is intent on something wholly different from grammar, as, for example, the experiences which the author is trying to picture, the whole mental and physical attitude of the reader will be very different. Perhaps the most striking example which can be anticipated from the later results is the example of Latin teaching. Pupils in the third year of Latin⁵ do not read the words which are offered to them. The obvious fact shown by their eye movements is that they do not even approach the reading attitude (p. 4). . . . It is altogether probable that the constant emphasis of the schools on analytical reading may set up a general tendency in the mind of the pupil that he is not doing his duty by a book unless he is perusing it slowly and laboriously and in a fashion which aims to find something in the passage other than the straightforward meaning. Most teachers assign lessons of such brevity as to make it clear that pupils are not expected to do much reading. The time is then occupied in

¹ Cf. Handschin, *op. cit.*, pp. 150, 162-165.

² Probably the most extensive summary of investigation in this field may be found in the *Third Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, Washington, 1926, pp. 152-204.

³ University of Chicago Press, 1922.

⁴ *Silent Reading. A Study of the Various Types.* University of Chicago Press, 1922.

⁵ This is a reference to an experiment involving the analysis of reading behavior through photographs of the eye movements.

class in searching . . . for curious rhetorical or historical intricacies. In the meantime the valuable habit of reading ahead in a straightforward fashion suffers by disuse . . . and by a series of involved distractions which bring into the reader's experience almost every other possible form of thinking. . . . Teachers should understand that reading habits set up under conditions which constantly and repeatedly demand elaborate grammatical analyses are not likely to be productive of fluent and progressive reading" (pp. 58-60, 66 *passim*).

With respect to the quantitative element, the authors maintain that grades above the primary call for much reading of a variety of material. Analytical study should come later. They assert, indeed, that analysis should be retained as a part of the student's training: "What must be done is to find a proper opportunity to perfect analysis. Neither analysis nor reading will be properly cultivated if they are confused with each other. The distinction is of the highest importance as a guide to proper methods" (p. 155). There is ample justification, they argue, to encourage considerable reading of English classics with no accompanying analysis until the student acquires some habits of appreciation, and they contend, like the Committee of Twelve, that no great harm is done if the pupil fails to understand in full linguistic detail at the first, or even at the second reading.¹

The authors of the monograph from which we have been citing are dealing primarily, it must be remembered, with the early stages of teaching to read in the mother tongue and with the subsequent practice essential to develop facility. For comparative purposes they studied in the same way a limited number of students in their seventh semester in French and in Latin. This investigation and the recent Buswell study² which has been frequently referred to provide considerable evidence that the same general principles apply alike to the process of learning to read a foreign language and the vernacular, despite the definite advantage in vocabulary stock that the child possesses when he attacks the printed page in the mother tongue and the further great advantage that he is engaged in oral composi-

¹ Although these investigators maintain that a great deal of reading experience is necessary in learning to read the mother tongue, they do not believe that sheer quantity is enough, as the following citation indicates: "It is a matter of common belief and there is some statistical evidence to show, that the amount and character of the material read are significant factors in producing individual differences in reading accomplishment. . . . Facts secured by Gray, Theisen, and Woody indicate some correlation between reading ability and the amount read. Owing to the fact, however, that some read carelessly, it is difficult to determine the real effect of quantitative reading." *Third Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, p. 196.

The foregoing sentences occur in a discussion of individual differences, and, when taken in their context, do not appear to weaken the argument in favor of a large reading experience, but suggest that it is quite possible for the student to have little real reading experience, although his eyes may travel over many pages. It goes without saying that this is not the kind of reading proposed anywhere in the body of the present discussion.

Definite evidence that increasing the amount of reading in the vernacular results in more rapid progress in rate and in comprehension is provided by F. A. Ford, "Diagnostic Supervision," *Journal of the Louisiana State Teachers Association*, I (April, 1924), pp. 30-35, and by C. W. Hunt, "Extensive Reading—A Factor in Developing Reading Ability," *School and Society*, XI (Feb., 1920), pp. 260-261.

² The evidence provided in this investigation that students taught Latin by a "direct" reading method perform notably better than those taught by an analytical procedure (pp. 71-78) is of considerable importance to all teachers of foreign languages.

tion in the vernacular during a large part of each day. To this extent, these and other inquiries into the nature of reading support the view that more attention ought to be paid to developing habits of silent reading for content and more insistence on a wider range of reading during the first two years, even at the expense of the reproductive exercises that now occupy the foreground in the estimation of both teachers and pupils. The extent of the reading necessary for this purpose can only be guessed at and no evidence is available with respect to differences that may be inherent in the character of the foreign language that is being learned. It will vary widely with individuals, with their general capacity and background and with their reading ability and experience in the mother tongue, but a guess of 1000 to 1500 pages for the first two years would probably be nearer the mark of what is desirable for high school than anything lower.

The Committee on Investigation is of course fully aware that the principle involved in the foregoing paragraphs is contrary to the theories and to the practice of many excellent teachers. In addition to the testimony of the selected teachers already cited, we may, for example, refer again to the statement of the Chairman of the Committee on Modern Languages of the N. E. A.:¹

"It is probable that most teachers will prefer to read a somewhat smaller number of pages than is there suggested (i.e. in the report of the Committee of Twelve). There is a strong belief that a small amount thoroughly prepared and carefully studied leaves a larger permanent possession than is retained from reading hastily several pages, and some would reduce the amount required to one-half that specified by the Committee of Twelve. . . . The solution seems to be a reasonable amount of honest work, at times so concentrated as permanently to impress essentials and at other times so distributed as to stimulate alertness, develop the power of swift vision and rapid judgment, and give opportunity for a fairly wide range of style and vocabulary."

The closing sentence of this quotation might be interpreted as favoring the principle advocated in the present discussion, but it is doubtful if those who endorsed it would, at the time, have laid as much emphasis upon quantity in reading and upon its value for developing reading power.

A more recent condemnation of the excessive amount of reading suggested by the College Entrance Examination Board, that is, by the Committee of Twelve, is to be found in *The French Review*,² by O. T. Robert:

"It is evident that it — the College Board — is not wholeheartedly with those who regard modern French as a language to be read, written, understood, and spoken, and one suspects it of having affinities with those whose ideal is a 'reading knowledge,' else why should it recommend as desirable an amount of reading which crowds out any serious study of the texts read . . . ?"³ It is so evident that

¹ *Methods of Teaching Modern Languages*, p. 164.

² I (1928), p. 34.

³ Compare with this, two sentences from Handschin (*op. cit.*, pp. 150 and 162): "We wish . . . to call attention to the fact that mere getting-the-sense reading is also of the greatest importance. . . . In linguistic study we need to get away from the narrow horizon of grammatical detail and to get a bird's-eye

extensive reading as practised in our schools is a hindrance to the formation of those habits of thoroughness of understanding and exactness of expression which characterize the scholar that one hesitates to insist. . . . If in three short years hundreds of pages have to be gone through and done into English — in addition to the memorizing of an infinite number of grammatical rules and the writing of composition exercises, the close study of French texts, . . . the use of them as models — in a word the application of laboratory methods to the teaching of French, and the mental training gained by such work,— all that becomes impossible."

Reduced emphasis on grammatical analysis. — What grammar shall the two-year course contain if reading be made the primary objective in deed as well as in word? Again it must be admitted that no one knows. We do not yet know which are the commonest grammatical phenomena in current written French, German, or Spanish that must be recognized as such in order to read and understand connected discourse. For reading purposes, the articles, the ordinary agreements, the position of the adjective, the complexities of the French partitive or of the weak-strong adjective endings in German, the differences between the use of the past tenses in French, the sequence of tenses in conditional sentences in French, the subjunctive in German, the differences between conjunctive and disjunctive pronouns in French — to enumerate only a few things that come to mind — need not be studied in the usual way, that is, committed to memory and practised over and over. Such knowledge is necessary for reproduction, for self-expression, but not for recognition. To be sure, the attention of the student will be led to focus itself more and more on such matters in the more advanced stages, but not until the reading attitude has been established. By the end of the second year the student should have had a good deal of practice in the use of the "essentials" and some in organizing them systematically, but his success in the course should be judged on the basis of the speed, the extent, and the quality of his reading rather than of his grade on the kind of examination that we usually set for all our classes, examinations that test formal grammar, functional grammar, detailed comparison of foreign vocabulary and idiom with English equivalents, with rarely a question to show that we set any store by the ability to read rapidly for content or that there is any merit in having read extensively in the foreign language. The general principle at issue here was stated a few pages back in the language of the psychologist; it was stated also in the words of the late Professor Joynes which, because of their aptness, may again be quoted in part: "The formal study of grammar . . . should be reduced to a minimum. The grammar should be for the

view of greater stretches of linguistic and literary landscape. This is best accomplished by extensive reading, without which the learner never really learns to read, and, more important still, does not acquire a love of reading." Compare the citation from the same author, *supra*, p. 144, note 3.

What is the modern language teacher to do when confronted with such conflicting prescriptions? Is it possible for him to carry water on both shoulders? Is it possible for him, under the conditions that prevail generally, to care for "the serious study of the texts" demanded by Professor Robert while giving his pupils glimpses of "greater stretches of linguistic and literary landscape,"— all in two years?

reading, not the reading for the grammar. Reading . . . should be begun the earliest possible day . . . and the further accretion of grammatical knowledge should be made to crystallize gradually around easy, interesting and pleasurable reading. The formal learning of paradigms may thus, I believe, be omitted except in largest outlines."¹ Such a point of view, if generally adopted, would result in a very distinct shift of emphasis as compared with the present practice. The same elements would still be present but in distinctly altered proportions.

Study of the foreign country and its civilization. — It has been abundantly demonstrated by the studies already referred to that the mere reading of the texts ordinarily used in the two-year high school course cannot be expected to provide the information about the foreign country and its people, the interpretation of its institutions past and present, and the enlightenment in regard to the character of the people and of their way of life that our students need in order to attain the "cultural" objective discussed in the preceding chapter. Even if the texts were richer in material of this sort, the narrow range and the small amount of the reading usually done in two years could hardly be expected to leave much of a deposit. It is difficult to say specifically how teachers think the desired results are to be achieved or to what degree they are attained. Questions bearing on this objective of the course rarely appear in examination papers, whether of individual teachers or of the best known examining boards, although, as we have seen, textbooks of an informative character are rather widely used, particularly in French and in Spanish. There is also considerable evidence of a widespread use in classrooms of maps, of pictures and of other illustrative material, both as a basis for oral practice and for its bearing on the "cultural" objective. In view of the use made of helps of this kind, teachers are justified in having greater confidence in the value of their efforts to inform their pupils about foreign countries and peoples than if they relied exclusively on the kind and restricted amount of reading matter to which the experience of our classes is now limited. Of one thing we may be sure: teachers must very definitely keep in mind the results they hope to achieve in this sphere; they must select the materials of the course and shape their procedure with this aim in view. Otherwise, as all the evidence indicates, the returns will be as small as they usually are in school activities when desirable results are expected to come as by-products. The findings of the Latin inquiry exemplify this fact, as has already been noted, and an analysis of modern language reading texts gives us no right to look for a different outcome in our own field.

It is probably not to be expected that courses of reading can be drawn up in the various literatures which will serve the quadruple purpose of

¹ In the absence of any extensive experimental evidence, the Committee on Investigation has thought it wise not to enter into details here.

interesting students to read for the sake of reading, of providing a suitable basis for oral and written work, of exemplifying the qualities of a foreign literature, and of furnishing what is necessary to interest, to inform, and to enlighten students in regard to the foreign country and its inhabitants. Teachers in European countries have been wrestling with the same problem, although in their attempts to solve it they have not, like us, been so sharply limited by the brevity of the period of study. The recent secondary courses of study in France and in Germany¹ give a place of considerable importance to anthologies compiled from the works of distinguished writers and made up of passages that, in the judgment of the editor, best illustrate the traits, the ideas, the customs, the attitudes of a nation. They are *morceaux choisis* of a definite kind, chosen from a "cultural" rather than from a purely literary point of view. These texts appear in the course at a rather advanced stage and are not merely to be read. They are to be studied, for the information they contain or imply, as well as for other purposes. The method of attack in French schools largely conforms to the *explication de textes*, which figures so largely in the French classroom, whether in the study of foreign or of vernacular texts.

"More than ever," say the *Instructions* for French secondary schools,² "the study of German will be the study of Germany, to learn English will be to learn about England and the rôle of British civilization in the world. . . . Instruction in this field will always proceed from representative texts, explained by the students or analyzed by the professor and linked together by him in such a way as to bring out the sequence of great events or the evolution of the mind. Great importance will be attached to making students familiar with the country, to depicting the manners, the customs, of the people who inhabit the country: their ways of living and of thinking."

Then follows enumeration of the topics to be treated in "seconde" (i.e., in the third year before graduation. Pupils have usually had four years of the language). The enumeration for Germany will suffice as an illustration:

1. The regions and the landscape of southern and of northern Germany.
2. Ancient and modern towns.
3. The German people: their manners, their family life, their growth of population.
4. Germany at work: agriculture, industry, trade.
5. The Germans according to Tacitus. The principal chapters of the *Germania* read and commented upon.
6. Charlemagne and the Christianization of Germany. The Holy Roman Empire; its claims and the opposition thereto.
7. The Hansa towns. The Renaissance and the Reformation. Artists and thinkers. Luther.
8. Political weakness of Germany in the 17th and 18th centuries.
9. Prussia and its growth in the 18th century. Frederick II.

¹ See Alexander and McMurry, *The Training of Modern Foreign Language Teachers for the French Secondary Schools*. To be published by the International Institute of Teachers College, Columbia University.

² *Dispositions d'ordre Pédagogique*, pp. 84-86, September, 1925.

In the following year ("première") this survey of Germany is supplemented by glimpses of the country and of its development in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

It would be obviously impossible to apply such a program unchanged to the American classroom, even to the third and fourth years in modern language, and much less to a two-year basic course with which this discussion is chiefly concerned. Our pupils are ready for it from the point of view neither of intellectual maturity nor of experience in the language, for the French professor and his students are expected to handle these topics in the foreign tongue, nor have American teachers the time in which to develop the material in the way contemplated by the French program, but the outlines of general instructions to teachers and the outline of topics provide us with an example of a formulation of the "cultural" objective and of the means by which it is to be attained.

The books in the foreign tongue on France or Germany or Spain that have been composed *ad hoc* by American teachers, "travelogues" of American boys and girls and a professor and the like, rarely rise beyond the level of conveying information in a systematic but pedestrian manner. Some of them, particularly those intended for "prose composition," so bristle with idioms as to be unnatural in style and have been composed quite evidently with linguistic practice in mind rather than the cultural purpose under discussion. The preparation for American schools, both for the two-year and for the higher levels, of "cultural" readers which would provide some of the informing and illustrative material on the foreign country and its civilization that is found only sparsely in the literary texts from foreign authors, would be a delicate and a difficult, but a highly useful task.¹

Furthermore, and especially in the two-year course where time is so limited, teachers should not fail to require readings in English, for abundant and excellent books and articles on all the foreign countries are available or should be available in every public and school library. Why should we make a fetish of getting everything through the foreign language? Too great insistence on foreign texts in geography, history and the like as the chief basis for classroom work may result in turning the modern language class into a question-and-answer course for acquiring information of a miscellaneous character about the foreign country. Is it extravagant to propose that teachers of history, of English, and of modern languages might collaborate on the reading course of the various high school years, and that the resultant reading list and the written reports on reading might be profitable to all departments concerned and also to all students, whether they are or are not in modern language classes? The reading lists given in the Denver "Course of Study Monographs" for French and for Junior

¹ Cf. the suggestions of Handschin, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-227.

High School Spanish (Nos. 15 and 11) are suggestive of the possibilities, although these lists were not drawn up on such a comprehensive basis and would have to be greatly broadened in scope. One of the chief criticisms of our educational practices today rests upon the habit that pupils develop of limiting their efforts to "lesson learning" and of considering that each subject occupies its own little sharply circumscribed territory. The abler pupils are more discerning, but all could profit by a plan of reading that tended to coördinate, to emphasize the unity of intellectual effort in the various fields, whether it be the effort of individuals or of nations. Only in some such way as this can instruction in the modern languages bring to the two-year students the broadening and liberalizing influences to which we so often refer, for even with a considerably augmented reading program in the foreign tongue, the range of such students in the foreign field would still be definitely circumscribed.

Recapitulation of possible reforms. — The reasons for devoting so much attention to the ground covered and to the degree of attainment in the first two years in modern languages should by this time be manifest, even to those who maintain that these reasons are not valid, or perhaps, that the evidence should be otherwise interpreted. If the greatest good for the greatest number of the modern language population is the point of departure, it is clear that we should attempt to agree on a course-content and a method of presentation that will combine most readily into a basic two-year course for all students. Each additional year should make its own distinct contribution to the further linguistic and cultural development of those who continue.

Whether this basic course, if accepted in principle, should be worked out in accordance with one or the other of the points of departure suggested can not be finally established with the evidence at hand, but obviously the character of the work in succeeding years must be planned with attainment in the preceding period as a basis and with the objectives of the course clearly in mind. Readers may find it convenient if we recapitulate the various possibilities of modification in the existing course in modern languages in the order in which they have been suggested in the preceding pages.

1. Reduce considerably the amount of time devoted to oral work and concentrate on developing a functional knowledge of grammar and the ability to read.
2. Secure the necessary reading experience by requiring considerably more reading outside the classroom than most classes do at present.
3. Adopt an extensive reading course for the majority of students, and limit instruction of the present type to those who will continue for more than two years in school or in college.
4. Exclude from modern language classes all but superior students, as determined by high standing in other subjects or by other means.
5. Discontinue the two-year secondary course except in the case of high school juniors or of other students who have a personal or vocational interest in modern

languages and will almost certainly continue in college. For all others demand a three-year period as a minimum.

6. Organize the course of the first two years as a stage during which, for most students, the criterion of success shall be the attainment of ability to read the foreign language in a manner approximating reading ability in the mother tongue, with speaking and writing in the background except as practice in speaking and writing and hearing is an aid in achieving power to read. The general assumptions on which such a course would be based are:

(a) Only those students who have read a very generous minimum number of pages and who give proof of really being able to read are to be credited as passing.

(b) Students who have attained this ability will necessarily have acquired considerable knowledge of grammar, through practice in recognition and some analysis, and a good deal of power to understand and to speak within the limits of the class material.

(c) Those who have successfully learned to read with considerable facility can more effectively acquire in the third year the additional knowledge and the skills they will need to qualify for the next stage.

Entirely aside from any of these courses of action is, of course, the desirability of raising the type of instruction everywhere to the level of those schools in which good results are now being attained. This would involve, among other things, appointing only teachers who are as well equipped by training and by personality as those in the favored schools, making their teaching load light enough not to drain their nervous energies too freely, excluding as quickly as possible from modern language classes all those who will not or can not make satisfactory progress, promoting in all schools a high degree of coöperation and inspiring all teachers with an equal degree of enthusiasm and of interest in their subject. If this could be done, much of the poor attainment would vanish, even if no other changes were made. In any case, such a general raising of teaching standards is devoutly to be desired and would work wonders in improving the results of modern language instruction.

It may be added that while there is no great amount of experimental evidence to indicate the exact lines that such a course as the one suggested under the sixth proposal should follow, the negative testimony is very strong that the next step for modern language instruction is either some such rather radical change in course-content and class procedure, or a drastic reduction in the number of students and the elimination of modern languages from many schools.

Indeed, it is altogether likely that both steps must be taken. It is a matter of common knowledge that in all subjects in which extensive testing has been done in the primary and secondary schools, general standards of performance have been found to be distressingly low. We are teaching the wrong things, or teaching them in the wrong way, or teaching them to the wrong pupils. If attainment in modern languages is no lower than in other subjects,¹ this fact may serve as balm to our pride but it does not

¹ The *Twenty-fifth Annual Report* of the Secretary of the College Entrance Board (pp. 2-3) indicates that performance in French in the years 1921-25 as judged by the number of books rated above 60 is on a

absolve us of the responsibility of examining our results in the light of our aims, and of seeking ways of improving a situation which, however high may be the level of attainment in a few centers, is definitely unsatisfactory for the country as a whole.

The course of the third and fourth years. — The content of the third and fourth years of the course depends so directly upon what has already been accomplished that little can be added on this topic to what is implied in the preceding discussion. Progress in knowledge of French grammar from fourth to sixth semester as revealed by scores in the American Council Alpha test is proportionate to progress in the preceding semesters. This is true likewise of scores in the vocabulary and in the reading tests. The situation for fourth-year French is ambiguous, but disquieting. It is ambiguous because of the comparatively small number of cases that could be tested for evidence. It is disquieting because while the gain in French vocabulary from the sixth to the eighth semesters is in harmony with the scores for the preceding semesters, the gain in grammar and in reading is not great, and in composition the eighth semester score is lower for the 85 cases tested than the sixth semester norm.

While there is in most cases a general upward swing of the curve of progress from semester to semester, a scrutiny of the test returns question by question discloses, as has already been indicated, a very poor yield in third and fourth years for a number of grammar topics that definitely belong to the elementary stage. Furthermore the third and fourth years, in which falls the most abundant practice in reading and in writing, should yield a more generous harvest in these two abilities. Classes at these stages are usually smaller, students unsuited for language work have supposedly been left behind, very little entirely new grammatical material is encountered. It may be that the chief emphasis here is on oral practice, the results of which, unfortunately, can not be gauged directly by the American Council tests, but since one of the arguments in favor of oral practice is its beneficial effect on ability to read and to write, it would appear, on this score also, that greater proportionate gains should be forthcoming. The probabilities are that the kind of grammatical correctness which we insist upon in written work can not be achieved by a large proportion of secondary school students. If this is true, we should do well to devote the third and fourth years chiefly to a wider range of reading, with more attention to the literary merit and the representative character of the texts, to a more careful and more extensive study of the foreign country and its civilization with appropriate and illustrative reading in English and in the foreign language, to organizing the students' knowledge of grammar, so that the power to understand more complex language material

par with performance in Latin and in mathematics, which subjects have comparable numbers of books, and a good deal higher than in English and history. German, with a much smaller number of books — *ca.* $\frac{1}{10}$ — is almost at the top of the list. In the period 1911–15 French was near the top, German near the end, but both above English and history, which have trailed at the foot of the list during the three five-year periods, 1911–1925.

may be increased and rendered more exact and writing may become more correct, and to a considerable amount of oral work as an objective in itself as well as because of the element of increased interest.

Such a program would involve in the course as a whole a reduction of emphasis on written work for its own sake, and an accompanying decrease in the importance we attach to ability to write in the foreign language as an objective. It would not eliminate written work entirely, but would reduce it to its proper rôle of handmaid to a systematic and functional knowledge of grammar, which is really the rôle it now plays except in cases where correspondence with foreign students supplies more definite motivation, for it is doubtful whether written work today, like translation into English, is considered by teachers as an end in itself. It is ostensibly a vehicle for practice of grammatical rules and for testing the extent to which these rules have been learned, but since the generally accepted criterion of success in nearly all examinations is the ability to translate into the foreign language English sentences that involve all the grammatical and idiomatic difficulties which teachers have been stressing, it is only natural that the ability to do this should have come to be generally regarded as an end in itself and should dominate most of our teaching effort. The influence of this state of affairs upon the two-year course is almost certainly harmful, and even in the more advanced years we may well inquire whether we study the language in order to learn the foreign equivalents for certain English expressions, or whether we regard practice of this kind as merely one of the devices to be used toward the attainment of our main objectives.

SUMMARIZING CONCLUSIONS

1. The choice of the basic vocabulary, of the idiomatic expressions and of the grammatical topics for study and drill in the elementary stages of the modern language course has hitherto been made largely on the basis of tradition, of chance or of individual judgment, and great diversity prevails, particularly with respect to the stock of words and idioms emphasized at this level. Wise use of word and of idiom counts will enable teachers to introduce their students from the outset to the stock of words and phrases that they will most need for reading. We may hope with considerable confidence that ways will be found to render possible the more difficult task of providing similar apparatus in the field of syntax.

2. Investigations of the "realia," or "cultural" elements, in the modern language course reveal, as might have been expected, that the amount of explicit material of this kind in the texts commonly read is small and unevenly distributed. It is, therefore, all the more necessary for teachers to keep in view the aim of acquainting their students with various aspects of the foreign civilization and to make definite provision therefor in order to supplement the material in the books chosen. In this connection, the teacher's responsibility for an adequate knowledge of the geography, the history, the literature, the customs of the foreign country, through study

and reading and through personal contacts, is even more exacting than has commonly been assumed.

3. Experience and statistical evidence in teaching the vernacular indicate that the amount of reading that pupils do is directly related to achievement both in rate of silent reading and in comprehension. Furthermore, experiments show conclusively that increasing the amount of reading that is required results in rapid progress in rate and in comprehension. Experimental data in the modern language field warrant the hypothesis that there is a close correspondence between limited reading experience and the poor attainment in reading by large numbers of second- and third-year students as attainment is evaluated by the American Council reading tests and by teacher opinion. It is fair to assume that if, as the result of a shift of emphasis, the amount of reading were considerably increased in modern language classes, there would result more rapid growth in rate and in comprehension, as has been clearly demonstrated in the case of classes in the vernacular.¹

Since reading ability is the one objective on which all agree, classroom efforts during the first two years should center primarily on developing the ability to understand the foreign language readily through the eye and through the ear. The goal must be to read the foreign language directly with a degree of understanding comparable to that possessed in reading the vernacular. In order that students may attain this goal, reading experience must be adequate and the results of all other types of class exercise must converge toward the same end.

In order that more abundant and more attractive reading material may be provided, modern language departments and committees on modern language courses should draw up considerable lists of reading texts in the foreign languages that are attractive to the varying tastes and interests of adolescents and of older students — fiction, drama, books of travel, history, science, biography and the like — and should make the texts available in school collections for free reading and for reading on assigned topics. Local, state and regional modern language associations can contribute very definitely to the realization of such a plan.

¹ Because of the length of the manuscript of this report it was impossible to submit copies to all the members of the Committee on Direction and Control. Copies of the "Summarizing Conclusions" were sent to each member and criticisms invited. In reply, three members of the Committee, Messrs. Hohlfeld, Roux and de Sauzé, expressed grave doubts as to the validity of the conclusions involved in this paragraph. In view of this dissent, at the invitation of the writer, Professor Hohlfeld has kindly consented to formulate his opinion regarding the question at issue and this has been approved by Mr. Roux and Mr. de Sauzé. It is as follows:

"I cannot but believe that the unsatisfactory results which obtain are generally due to causes but little, if at all, remediable by increasing the ground that is to be covered. In cases where even a limited amount of work is inadequately done — and they are the ones that bring down the general average — a considerable increase in reading requirements, even though this be offset by lessening the time spent on other exercises and by devoting more time to actual practice in reading, is likely to do more harm than good, and may even prove a step backward in the direction of reading by translation."

III

ORGANIZATION OF CLASSES

WHY STUDENTS ARE MISCLASSIFIED

The two principal causes. — In the course of the preceding pages there have been numerous references to the fact that modern language students — like all others — are classified with but little apparent regard to their relative attainment in knowledge of the subject. This is no news to teachers. Of the 580 secondary school teachers who replied to the questionnaire addressed to selected teachers, 338 or 58 per cent indicated the belief that improper classification of students is one of the chief reasons why they fail to reach their objectives.¹ Whenever students transfer from one institution or system to another — as from junior high school to high school, or from secondary school to college — there is much lost motion.² Teachers in the institutions to which the transfer is made are loud in their complaints of the poor knowledge of the “essentials” on the part of incoming students or of their inability to do the oral work of their courses. The familiar unevenness of their own classes disturbs them much less than the unaccustomed types of ignorance exhibited by newcomers, particularly if they come from institutions lower down on the educational ladder.

The familiar inequalities in all classes, while due to manifold causes, may, for our purposes, be attributed chiefly to two: unequal general capacity and unequal knowledge of the subject matter.³ Deficiency in

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 18. Curiously enough a good many of those whose returns were examined for this particular point seem to have fewer misgivings about the classification of their own students than of those who came to them from other schools or from other teachers. It is interesting to speculate on the reasons for this. It may be because each teacher has special hobbies on which for him salvation depends; or because in our individual or school routine, the knowledge of certain items is held to represent success at a certain stage; or because we are not agreed on what constitutes a standard at a given level; or because pupils are nearly always tested on the basis of a given number of pages of a given text rather than on knowledge of the subject and, therefore, do badly on a test given by another teacher.

² In Henmon's discussion of achievement testing (Chapter VI, pp. 207-214), there is an extended review of the evaluation of high school credits in terms of college semesters. Despite the great individual variations, the conclusion is that the ratio of two semesters in high school to one in college appears to be justified in general by the results in terms of the American Council test scores for the first four high school semesters and the first two in college. After that point high school students appear to advance at a relatively faster pace, especially in knowledge of grammar. Figures 8 to 11, which are reproduced below from the Henmon volume, illustrate this vividly, and, with their contradictory features, plead eloquently in favor of standardized placement tests as an aid in classifying students who transfer from one institution to another, whether of the same or of different rank.

³ Cf. the discussion in Handschin, *op. cit.*, Chapter XII, pp. 261-270. An almost equally important cause is the failure of our methods of testing to discriminate between students having unequal knowledge of the subject.

subject matter may be ascribable in turn, of course, to various causes: poor teaching, lack of application, unfavorable school conditions, unsuitable course material, or, perhaps, special linguistic disability.¹ It is thus rather a symptom than a cause. Determination of the cause of the deficiency in each particular case is, obviously, a delicate affair and selection of the proper remedial measures is more delicate still. In the present discussion we shall examine chiefly the more general problem and possible methods of attack thereon. Even here our consideration of the subject must be restricted to the general symptoms of lack of homogeneity in classes that fall strictly within the modern language domain, namely to deficiencies in knowledge of subject matter, for a discussion of sectioning students according to general ability is manifestly not a modern language problem, unless it were to be established, as has not infrequently been suggested, that only members of the superior sections ought to be eligible for modern language instruction. This was referred to in the preceding chapter, but too little evidence is available at the present moment to permit of any definite conclusions. The bibliography of the subject of sectioning students according to general ability is very large.² The principles involved and the devices to be employed in practical situations are at the present time topics of animated discussion in important secondary school centers and by the officers or committees charged with the administration of college entrance requirements. In connection with modern languages in particular, we can refer only to the very modest amount of evidence that has been collected and the wholly tentative conclusions to which it points.³

The opinions and practices of teachers. — There have been numerous references in the course of this discussion to the fact that 486 or 84 per cent of the selected teachers replying to the questionnaires sent out by the Study stated that one of the principal obstacles to achievement of the objectives proposed is the presence in their classes of students who lack "linguistic capacity." Whatever may be the actual significance of this term when analyzed in individual cases — and again we call attention to the discussion of this topic by Morrison (cf. *supra*, p. 131, note), — it represents a very real state of affairs in the minds of modern language teachers, who further assert — 68 per cent of the 484 who replied — that they have

¹ Cf. the analysis of causes of failure, *supra*, p. 112.

² University of Pennsylvania Bulletin, 1924, XI, 78-113; *Twenty-Third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*: "Education of Gifted Children," Bloomington, Ill., 1924, *passim*, and especially pp. 389-443. See also *Twenty-Fourth Yearbook*, pp. 317-335. As the result of an experiment with college students at the University of Illinois, James Burton Tharp concludes in favor of sectioning modern language students according to ability, and of using standardized tests for placement and for evaluating relative achievement. See *Modern Language Journal*, XII (1927), 95-114. At the same time it must be noted, in view of the data gathered by the Study, that the correlations between intelligence test scores and attainment in modern languages are too low to warrant our placing great confidence in the predictive value of the intelligence quotient alone. See *Prognosis Tests in the Modern Foreign Languages*, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," Vol. XIV; see also the studies by Cole and by Wood reported by Henmon in *Achievement Tests in the Modern Foreign Languages*, pp. 330-340.

³ Cf. Henmon, *op. cit.*, Chapter X.

found cases of apparent linguistic disability not accompanied by low general intelligence.

Moreover a very large majority of this group of secondary school teachers — 95 per cent of the 528 who replied to the question — expressed the opinion that special sections should be organized for rapid learners of language, while 88 per cent of the 540 replying advocate separate sections for the average group, and slightly over 88 per cent of 549 advocate separate sections for pupils who learn language slowly.

When asked how, in their judgment, the segregation should be made, opinions are more divided. About 50 per cent of the 393 voting favor some form of prognostic testing; 73 per cent of 421 favor a trial period of two to six weeks; 81 per cent of 369 teachers advocate a longer trial period of one semester; and 74 per cent of 384 voters believe that the segregation should be postponed until the end of the first year. However, when questioned about their experience with classes so sectioned, teachers reply in a much less categorical fashion. Of the 187 — about 32 per cent of the whole group — who indicate some experience, 46 per cent report that the results were "good," 15 per cent report that they were "excellent," and 22 per cent report that they were "fair." Since the vote in favor of "good" to "excellent" is about 61 per cent of the voting group, and since only about 13 per cent considered the results "poor" to "negligible," we may conclude that teacher opinion is, in the case of the limited number who have tried it, distinctly favorable to the experiment.

The replies to a question about the means used to differentiate between students are interesting but less easy to interpret. They may be more intelligible if put as nearly as possible in tabular form:

Question: Record the means you have used in advising students:

(a) To elect a modern language. There were 510 replies divided as follows: I. Q., 22 per cent; English grade, 23 per cent; standing in early weeks of course, 27 per cent. The rest scattering.

(b) Not to elect a modern language. There were 553 replies, divided as follows: I. Q., 24 per cent; English grade, 25 per cent; standing in early weeks of course, 30 per cent. The rest scattering.

(c) To drop the subject. There were 499 replies, divided as follows: Tests, 20 per cent; I. Q., 13 per cent; standing in early weeks of course, 53 per cent. The rest scattering.

(d) To enter sections on the basis of the probable relative speed of learning. There were 304 replies, divided as follows: I. Q., 24 per cent; standing in early weeks of course, 32 per cent; tests, 23 per cent. The rest scattering.

The rôle of "exploratory" courses in the experience of the teachers replying appears to have been too small to deserve more than a mention. Of the 313 teachers of the group who replied to a question about the success

of their efforts to determine in advance the probable success or failure of students enrolling in their modern language classes, 66 per cent report that it was "good" to "excellent" and 30 per cent report that it was "fair."

The members of the group were also asked to indicate what kinds of information they seek in regard to the probable standing of their students. Of 554 teachers, about 50 per cent try to ascertain the intelligence test rating; of 530, 74 per cent inquire about their previous success in modern language work; of 546, 61 per cent ascertain their standing in English; of 463, 45 per cent inquire about their standing in mathematics; and of 460, 55 per cent seek to learn their success with some sort of prognostic test.

It would be difficult to draw any clear cut and practical conclusions from the foregoing evidence in regard to teacher opinion and teacher practice in organizing modern language classes. Evidently, however, members of the profession believe that a considerable number of students who enroll will not, for one reason or another, pursue the subject successfully, as success in a foreign language is usually estimated, and would welcome heartily some definite and practicable procedure whereby greater selection may be exercised in differentiating between the various groups, both for the purpose of discouraging the unfit and of grouping together those whose learning rates in modern languages are relatively equal. It is evident, furthermore, that a considerable number of our secondary school colleagues are endeavoring to find some way out of the labyrinth and are experimenting to that end with some diligence. It is probably true, however, that their experimentation is carried on in such loose fashion that the results therefrom during a given semester or year are not so tested and recorded as to serve, either to themselves or to others, as a point of departure for continued inquiry. Nothing definite can come of experimentation — if the term may be properly applied in such cases — thus carried on. We may also venture to make the statement, evidence for which will appear in the following pages, that a judicious use of comprehensive, uniform and objectively scored achievement tests will immensely alleviate among modern language teachers the feeling of great discomfort, to the existence of which the foregoing evidence bears ample testimony, for, from the standpoint of the profession, the touchstone of proper classification will always be the ability to use the languages. When adequate testing has shown that a student is out of place with respect to most of his classmates, his case must be investigated and proper steps be taken by the school authorities, whose coöperation is essential in such cases. At the same time, we must thoroughly explore the possibilities of discovering ways whereby we may with confidence predict the relative degree of success in modern languages. Furthermore, the strong conviction existing in certain quarters that enrollment in foreign language work should be restricted to students who are above the average in the qualities that make

for attainment in this field ought not to be lightly put aside, especially as it appears to be shared by a significant number of modern language teachers.¹

EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE OF POOR CLASSIFICATION

When we come to examine the status of the modern language classes of the country at large in regard to their homogeneity in language knowledge, we fortunately have much more evidence, evidence that illumines not only the facts as they are but, to a hopeful extent, the way in which these facts are to be interpreted. This evidence comes primarily from two sources: the data derived by Professor Wood from his extensive testing campaign in New York, and by the Study Committee from the testing it has done over a wider area geographically, both in secondary schools and in colleges.² It serves to show in perfectly definite ways that wide differences in attainment exist between schools of ostensibly the same standards and equipment professionally, as well as between individuals and classes that are presumed to belong to the same levels of advancement. Furthermore, it provides an excellent basis for the prediction that a similar analysis of the situation in other school and college subjects would yield highly similar results.

Wood's New York data. — Wood's discussion of the evidence brought together in *New York Experiments with New-Type Modern Language Tests* (Macmillan, 1927) is too extensive to be reproduced here except in part. A careful perusal of this highly significant and pioneer study would alone convey an adequate understanding of the data there presented. In the present connection we can do no less, however, than point to some of the passages that bear most directly on the question at issue.

Misplacement in junior high school. — In his discussion of the junior high school situation in New York City as revealed by a study of the test results (pp. 19–38),³ the author points out that 30 per cent of the 8B (second semester) students at the end of the academic year 1924–25 were either below the average of the 8A (first semester) classes in achievement or above the average of the 9A (third semester). "This fact means that the 8B

¹ See the more extensive discussion of experimental work in *Prognosis Tests in Modern Foreign Languages*, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," Vol. XIV. The following citation from a summary by Henmon in this work is pertinent: "The cumulative evidence from these various studies is that the correlation between intelligence test scores and success in the modern foreign language, whether estimated by teachers' marks or objective tests, lies somewhere between .20 and .60, falling more often between .30 and .40. While this indicates a positive relationship and that an intelligence test score would be a useful member in a team of tests to predict accomplishment, it can not be used alone successfully. . . . The evidence presented in this summary indicates that special prognosis tests are more effective instruments than general intelligence tests and that these, together with objective measurement in a trial period, furnish in the present state of our knowledge the best bases of prediction and classification."

It may be added that no really satisfactory language aptitude tests have as yet been developed and standardized.

² See Henmon, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

³ For a full discussion of the reliability and validity of the tests used, the American Council Beta modern language tests, forms A and B, see Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 ff.

teachers did not have *classes* to teach but heterogeneous aggregations of unhappy students, some of whom were below the lower quartile of the 8A class, and some of whom were above the average of the 9B class!" (p. 27). Furthermore about 24 per cent of the 8A students were nearer to the 8B, or to some higher average than to their own class average; about 29 per cent of the 8B students were nearer to some higher class average than their own; and about 30 per cent of the 9A students were nearer to the 8B average than to their own class average. Thus about 30 per cent of all 8B students are below the average of the next lower class, about 30 per cent are above the average of the next higher class, and about 60 per cent of the 8B students

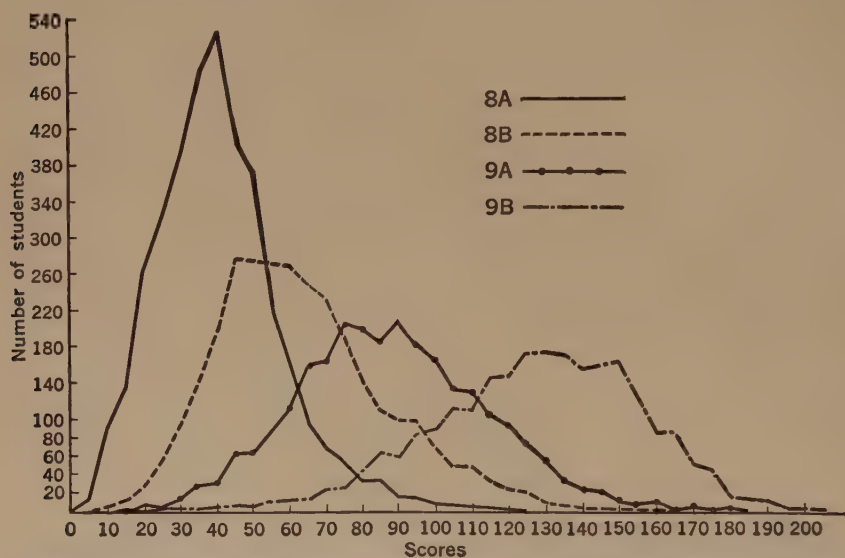


FIGURE 1. — Graphs of the distributions of scores of 8A, 8B, 9A, and 9B students of French in the junior high schools of New York City, June, 1925. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

are nearer to some other class average than to their own. Only about 40 per cent of the 8B students are closer to their own class average than to some other class average. From the graphs, therefore, we learn "that over 2000 of the nearly 19,000 junior high school French students are misplaced by a whole semester or more, and that approximately 10,000 of them are nearer to a higher or a lower class average than to the average of the class in which they were reciting during the spring of 1925" (p. 26). The situation in the Spanish classes as revealed in this study was even more unsatisfactory than in the French. About 36 per cent of the Spanish 8B group were misplaced by a whole semester or more and fewer than 40 per cent were nearer to their own median than to a higher or a lower median. "In general terms, then, more than one in ten of the Spanish students in the New York City junior high schools are misplaced by one se-

mester or more, and considerably more than half the students are nearer in achievement to the average of a class which is one semester higher or lower than to the average of the class in which they recited during the spring of 1925" (p. 27).

Figure 1 (Wood, p. 32) represents in graphic form the distribution of students in the four semesters of the regular junior high French classes. The vertical line represents the number of students and the horizontal line the total scores on the three parts of the test. The overlapping is very obvious, particularly of 8B with 8A and of 9A with 8B, as is also the wide range of the scores, particularly in 9A (from 5 to 185) and in 9B (from 10 to 205).

The situation in Spanish is quite similar, as may be seen by referring to Figure 8 in Wood's volume (p. 33).

The difference between achievement in different schools is just as striking as the misplacement of students in each group as a whole. In fact these differences between schools constitute undoubtedly one of the major sources of the amazing heterogeneity that becomes all the more manifest when French II or Spanish III is considered as a whole for a group of schools, whether the group represents a city system, a state, or a sampling for the country in general. This comes out in Figure 2 which, with the accompanying comment, is taken from the Wood volume (pp. 32-35).

"The four horizontal lines . . . represent the averages of the classes on a city-wide basis, the score scale being at the left. Thus the reader will notice that the lowest line, marked at its left '8A,' is drawn just a little below the line corresponding to a score of 40. . . . The average score of all 8B students is . . . 61, and the 8B line . . . is drawn slightly above the line corresponding to a score of 60. And so with the 9A and 9B lines.

"The vertical line near the left end of each of the class average lines represents the interquartile range of the class, that is, the range of the middle fifty per cent of the students in the class. Thus the vertical line near the left end of the 9B average line extends from the line corresponding to a score of 110 to a point above the 9B average line corresponding to a score of 148. . . . In other words, 25 per cent of the 9B students secured scores below 110, 50 per cent secured scores between 110 and 148, and 25 per cent secured scores above 148. The interquartile ranges of the classes as indicated on these charts will be a convenience to certain types of readers, but they are not at all essential to an understanding of the main features. . . . Teachers who have no predilection for statistical refinements may forget that these lines are in the charts. The important thing is to keep in mind that the horizontal lines, in order, represent the class averages in terms of the original units of the tests, which may be read on the score-scale at the extreme left of each chart.

"Without further explanation, let us compare the two schools whose identities in . . . we have hidden under the numbers 5 and 6. Number 5 had no 8A, 8B or 9B students; it had only students which it classified as 9A. But the heavy line rising from the 9A average-line shows that the average score of this 9A class is actually 127 — almost equal to the 9B city-wide average! In school Number 6 the light line dropping down from the 9B average-line shows that the students classified as 9B secured an average score of only 91 — almost average for 9A classes! In other words, No. 5 actually had a 9B class, but called it a 9A class;

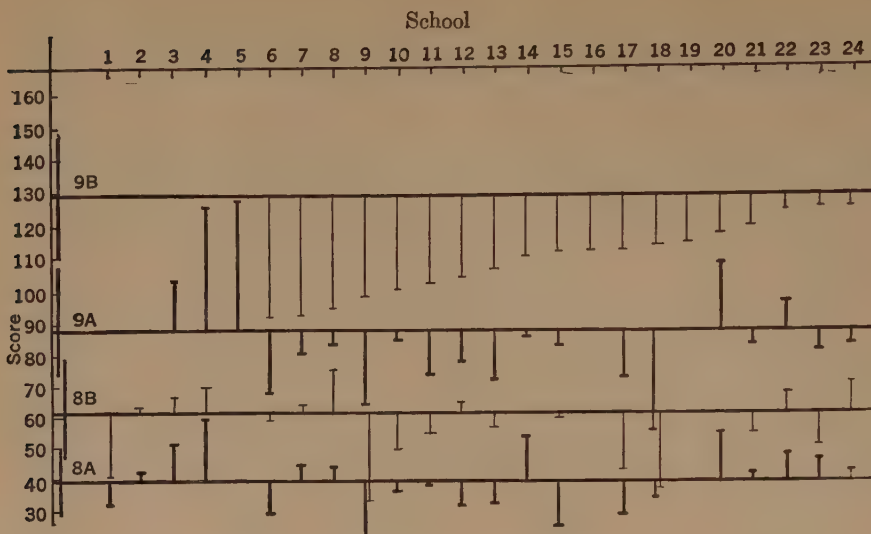


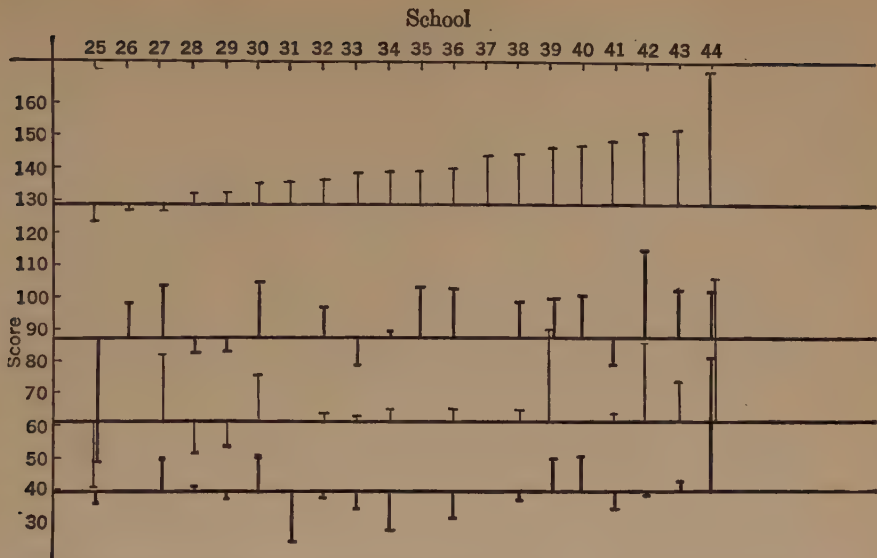
FIGURE 2. — Graphic comparison of median scores of each "normal" French class

whereas No. 6 had no 9B class, but called what was actually a 9A class a 9B class. Nor did school No. 6 have any 9A class other than the group of students it *called* 9B; for the students which this school classified as 9A are actually only slightly above the 8B city-wide average. Here we have two classes *called* 9A, one of which (school No. 5) is actually an average 9B class, and the other (No. 6) is only slightly above average for 8B classes,—a whole year apart in actual achievement.

"As a further example of how the charts should be read, let us compare schools 8, 9, and 10. Notice that in these charts we have arranged the schools in an ascending order of 9B class averages, from left to right. Thus schools 8, 9, and 10 have 9B classes with approximately equal averages, all of which are nearer to the 9A city-wide average than to the 9B city-wide average. But the three schools are alike in no other respect, in so far as class standards are concerned. School 9 classes are consistently about one semester below city-wide standards; indeed, the 8B class in this school is somewhat below that city-wide 8A average. In schools 8 and 10 the 8A and 9A classes are almost exactly at par; but the so-called 8B classes in these schools vary from the city-wide average about equally in opposite directions.

"In schools 18 and 20 the 8A and 9A classes vary in opposite directions. In 18 the 9A class average is below the 8B city-wide standard, while in school 20 the 9A class average is about halfway up to the 9B standard; and in 18 the 8A together with the 8B class is below par, while in 20 the 8A is almost average for 8B classes."

These striking variations in achievement from school to school disclosed by the administration throughout a large group of schools of a uniform, comprehensive, objectively scored test, are all the more noteworthy when we remember that they appear in junior high schools belonging to a single system, in the largest city in the country, where the modern language work, both in the high and in the junior high schools, is under the general



in 24 junior high schools in New York City, June, 1925. Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 35.

control of highly competent directors with long experience, a favorable situation that prevails in only a few other important school centers. Whatever the manifold causes that contribute to the unevenness in attainment in the beginning semester, and to a certain extent in the succeeding semesters, it may now be asserted without hesitation that the failure of teachers and of school administrators to detect the wide variations and to redistribute the classes accordingly constitutes a grave indictment of our present system of examinations and of school administration. If students are to be classified on the basis of knowledge of the subject, our present examination practices appear to be almost entirely unavailing. They entail a certain amount of review by students of a given body of material covered during a given period, but they wholly fail to differentiate between them according to attainment. That is already obvious from the preceding data drawn from the junior high school field, but there is more to come, to which we shall proceed after citing a few of the pungent sentences with which the author closes this part of his study (pp. 101-103, *passim*).

"There can be no doubt about the necessity of sweeping away completely . . . , the time-serving conception which has thus far so largely dominated the organization and administration of modern language instruction. . . . To give entirely different examinations to each of the four high school classes, for example, and to refuse all first- and second-year students admission to the third and fourth

year examinations, is nothing but gratuitously punishing the best of the students in first and second year classes for not being stupid enough to require four years to surpass the average of all fourth year students. It is precisely the highest 15 or 20 per cent of first year students who . . . will ultimately contribute 70 per cent of the successful students in advanced courses.

"If a student can read French no better than the average first year student, let us say by the grade that we assign him, whether he has 'taken' French three or five years or not at all; and if he knows as much French as the average fourth year student, let us indicate that by the grade assigned to him, whether he has 'taken' French only a year, or a month, or not at all. . . .

"Teachers everywhere are beginning to appreciate the elemental necessity for comparability of school grades. . . . The increasing use of objective and reliable tests is making possible research which is not only genuinely scientific, but is on a scale large enough to secure conclusions of more than local significance. The fact that these new types of tests afford measures that are comparable will make the conclusions of all research workers and teachers at least understandable, if not acceptable, to every competent teacher."¹

Overlapping in high schools. — In the preceding pages there have been repeated references to an even more extended inquiry by Professor Wood, an account of which constitutes the larger part of the volume on which we have been drawing. At the request of the New York state educational authorities, an objective, uniform examination was administered in the spring of 1925 as one-half of the annual Regents' Examination in the second-, third- and fourth-year modern language classes. Owing to circumstances, the students examined were granted or denied credit on the basis of scores on the old-type portion of the examination, which followed the familiar pattern.² The following numbers of students were involved:

French II	13,486	German II	1482	Spanish II	5340
French III	6,741	German III	667	Spanish III	2467
French IV	489	German IV	127	Spanish IV	226
Total	<u>20,716</u>		<u>2276</u>		<u>8033</u>

The whole experiment is fully discussed in the Wood volume, pp. 107-319, of which we shall utilize only such portions as are immediately germane to the present topic, omitting most of the exceedingly important discussion of the derivation, the validity and the reliability of the tests on which the experiment was based.³ From this investigation proceed a

¹ Professor Wood might have added that in such situations teachers are helpless to take any action without the aid and approval of school administrations. They can and should use testing instruments that reveal the true situation. The radical readjustments that would follow are the responsibility of superintendents and principals. Teachers must provide the evidence; school authorities must act upon it.

² Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

³ "Method of constructing new-type tests.—The construction of the new-type modern language examinations used in this experiment was a much longer process than making out a set of old-type examinations. The forms of the questions were decided upon after three years of extensive experimentation with more than 20 different forms of modern language examination questions. The vocabulary samplings used were based upon word counts of sixteen widely used textbooks in two languages (French and Spanish) and upon a synthesis of various word counts of textbooks and syllabi in the third language (German). The grammar and idiom content of the new-type tests was determined item by item, on the basis of extensive syntheses

number of conclusions of great significance in the present connection. There is space here for little more than an enumeration. In the first place, a calculation of the intercorrelation between the new-type and the old-type ratings of students in schools of various kinds (pp. 130-132) in French makes it clear that the larger schools habitually grade their old-type modern language papers with considerably more uniformity and have, as a consequence, more homogeneous classes than do the smaller schools and academies. Furthermore, achievement in the subject matter, as revealed in the comparable scores derived from new-type tests, is notably less in the latter group of schools. Abundant evidence for these conclusions is contained in Table 21 of the Wood volume (pp. 130-131) and in the accompanying exposition, to which readers of the present discussion are referred. It must be kept constantly in mind that the existence of such differences in achievement between schools and types of schools could be revealed only by examinations of a different type from those to which the profession is accustomed.

This experiment uncovered also extensive overlapping of classes as appears graphically in the following chart, which disposes of the

"customary assumption regarding modern language students who are in separate year-classes . . . that they are separate and distinct species, so that students in French III, for example, are regarded as *ipso facto* entirely above French II students and entirely below those in French IV.

"The assumption is . . . the lowest French II students are still above the highest French I students, and the highest French II students are still below the lowest French III students. The examining problem is, therefore, one of merely differentiating among the best and poorest of each of the discrete groups; since, in accordance with the assumption, failure in one course can not mean anything worse than having to repeat the course, and similarly passing can not mean more than that the student is more or less well prepared to begin the next course. This assumption sounds quite absurd when stated thus baldly, yet it is the only assumption that in any way justifies the giving of separate examinations to each year-group.

"It is clear from Chart 16 [in this volume Figure 3], however, that whatever examinations or administrative procedures are responsible for assigning the students to the year-classes in which they took the Regents' examinations in June, 1925, the classes were not formed in accordance with the assumption illustrated in the figure above. The classification is so poor that it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that teaching efficiency must have been seriously impaired, and constructive educational guidance of students rendered practically impossible. Since the sigma-range shows the range of scores of the middle two-thirds of each class, it is easy to see that the upper 15 per cent of French III students are considerably

of standard grammars and syllabi. These selections of material were finally checked up by actual experiment. No item was accepted for final use unless it gave a positive correlation with known criteria of achievement. Each new-type examination was constructed to cover the whole range of achievement in high school modern language work. That is, each examination included some items easy enough to be answered correctly by the poorest students at the end of the first year and some questions so hard that they could be answered only by the best students at the end of the fourth year. The "easiness" or "hardness" of each individual item was determined upon the basis of the responses by numbers of modern language students in high schools ranging from several hundred to several thousand. No appeal was made at any time to the subjective judgment of scholars regarding the difficulty or the measurement value of an item."

above the French IV average, and that the lower 15 per cent of the French IV students are well below the French III average. And so with the German and Spanish classes" (*ibid.*, pp. 155-156).

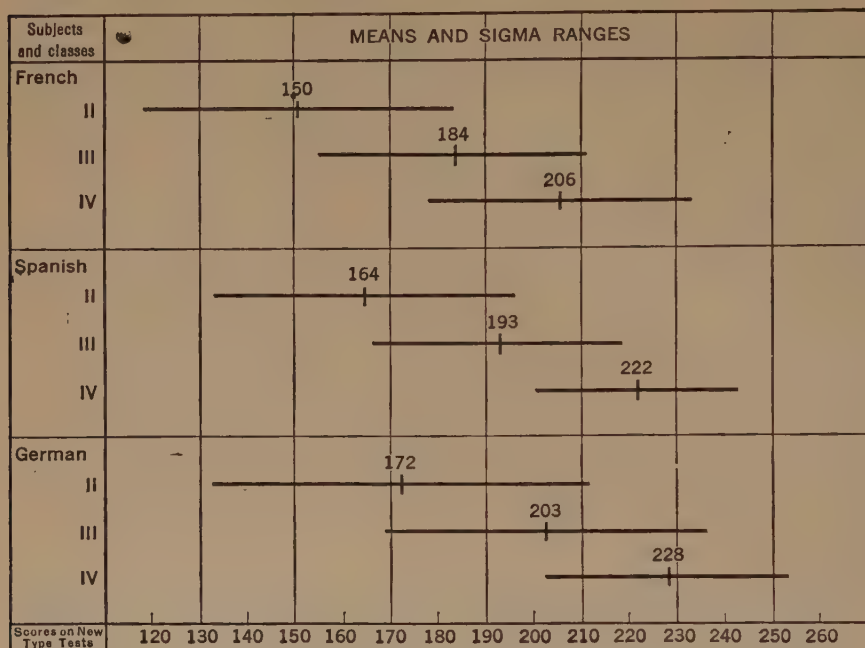


FIGURE 3. — Means and sigma-ranges of scores on new-type modern language examinations in French, Spanish, and German, of all students taking the Regents' examinations in June, 1925. The sigma-range comprises about two-thirds of the scores in each class; the overlapping of classes is very apparent. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

Further evidence is given (*ibid.*, pp. 157-167) to show more in detail the extent to which students are misplaced by old-type examinations even when constructed and administered with the care exercised in the case of the Regents' examinations. It appears that in terms of new-type test scores about 12 per cent of French III and about 4 per cent of the French IV students were below the French II average; about 15 per cent (i.e., over 2000) of the French II students were above the French III average and about 22 per cent of the French IV group were below the French III average; about 17 per cent of French III students (i.e., some 1100) and about 3 per cent of French II students were above the French IV average. From the data one would conclude that approximately 30 per cent of all the French students examined were misplaced by a year or more, and about 60 per cent by as much as one semester.¹

¹ The situation is summarized in the following quotation: "By the old-type Regents' examinations in French about 5 per cent or 6 per cent of all French students are misplaced by two years or more, about

The situation in German and in Spanish is very similar as it appears from Charts 21 and 22 of the Wood volume, and the whole modern language situation is summarized in the following Table 27 (*ibid.*, p. 171), which shows how a good many students who were graded as having failed in the old-type test were nevertheless well above their own group when rated by new-type scores. For example, 22 per cent of French III students were above the French IV mean, but only 14.8 per cent of these were passed; 22 per cent of French IV students were below the mean of French III, but 17.5 per cent of these were passed!

TABLE 27

OVERLAPPING OF MODERN LANGUAGE CLASSES, SHOWING THE PER CENT OF EACH CLASS THAT EXCEEDS THE NEXT HIGHER CLASS AVERAGE, AND THE PER CENT THAT FALLS SHORT OF THE NEXT LOWER CLASS AVERAGE ACCORDING TO NEW-TYPE SCORES. THE PER CENTS IN ODD-NUMBERED COLUMNS APPLY ONLY TO STUDENTS PASSED BY THE DEPARTMENT ON THE OLD-TYPE PART OF THE EXAMINATION; THE OTHER FIGURES RELATE TO ALL STUDENTS THAT TOOK THE NEW-TYPE TESTS IN EACH CLASS IN JUNE, 1925. THE CLASS MEANS USED IN EVEN-NUMBERED COLUMNS ARE OF THE TOTAL NUMBERS OF STUDENTS IN EACH CLASS, AND IN ODD-NUMBERED COLUMNS OF STUDENTS PASSED BY THE DEPARTMENT REVIEWERS (Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 171).

(1)	PER CENTS OF STUDENTS IN CLASSES INDICATED IN COLUMN (1) WHO ARE							
	Above 3rd-Year Mean		Above 4th-Year Mean		Below 2nd-Year Mean		Below 3rd-Year Mean	
	Total	Passed	Total	Passed	Total	Passed	Total	Passed
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
French II . . .	15.0	15.0	4.0	2.0				
III . . .			22.0	14.8	10.0	9.7		
IV . . .					3.0	2.0	22.0	17.5
Spanish II . . .	18.0	16.4	2.0					
III . . .			10.0	14.0	12.0	13.0		
IV . . .						1.0	10.0	11.0
German II . . .	23.0	18.4	6.0	7.0				
III . . .			45.0	30.0	18.0	18.0		
IV . . .					6.0	2.0	24.0	23.6

"In order to make the facts of overlapping of classes as clear as possible and to show the evidence on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the old-type Regents' examinations in as many lights as possible, we present the facts of the preceding charts in another series of frequency polygons.

"The advantage of Chart 30 [our Figure 4] is that corresponding groups in the three classes may be directly compared. The three frequency polygons at the top of the chart refer to total, passed and failed groups of French II students. The

33 per cent by one year or more, and more than 60 per cent by one semester or more. Less than 40 per cent of the students as classified by the Regents' old-type examinations are nearer to their own class median than to some other class median" (*ibid.*, p. 167).

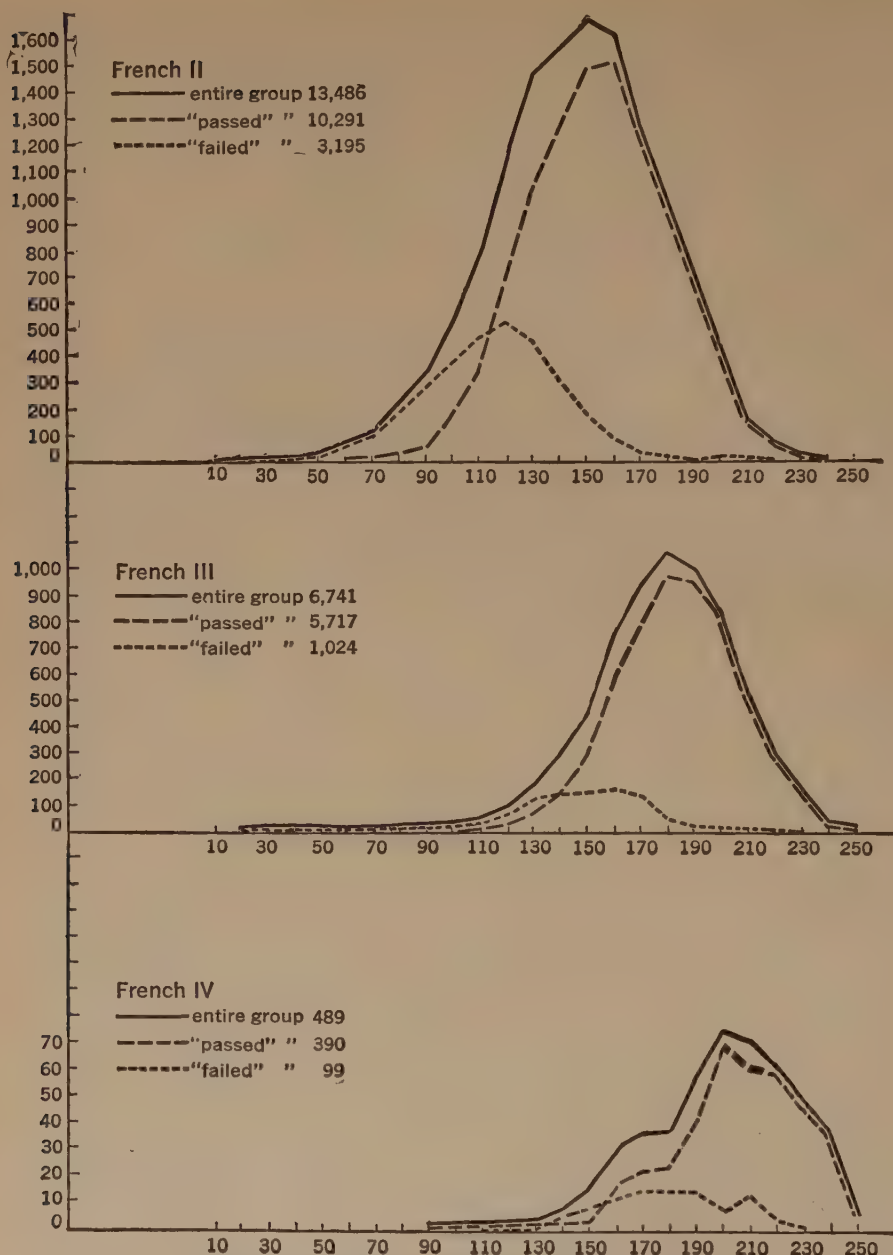


FIGURE 4. — Graphs of distributions of new-type scores of total population, passed and failed groups of each French class. The passed and failed groups consist of students passed or failed by the old-type parts of the Regents' examinations. Scores are represented on the abscissa; the number of students on the vertical. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

curves at the bottom of the chart refer to total, passed and failed groups of French IV students. All nine frequency polygons of the chart are set up over the same scale of scores, as indicated under the base lines of the polygons. By placing a straight-edge vertically on the chart and sliding it from left to right the reader may make the same comparisons as were made by means of the percentile curves described above" (*ibid.*, pp. 173, 178).

Wood's charts 31 and 32¹ present a similar exhibit for German and for Spanish which are corroborative of the showing for French in Figure 4 above.

"It is obvious" (from Figure 4), observes Professor Wood (p. 178), "that at least a few students who were failed in second year French received higher scores on the objective test than half the students who were passed in fourth year French received. It is also clear . . . that some students who were passed in fourth year French received scores lower than the average score received by students who were failed in second year French. . . . Even though the reader may still be doubtful of the validity of the new-type examinations, the differences in standards set forth [by Figure 4] are so great that they cannot be explained away by adverting to the possible lack of validity in the new-type scores."

It may be added as a small crumb of comfort to optimistic colleagues that Professor Wood's experiment, which included physics as well as modern languages, revealed a similar situation in this subject. That is, many physics students were passed by the old-type ratings who were obviously failures as judged by new-type scores, and many whose low level of achievement was revealed by the new-type, objectively scored test were credited as having passed the old-type portion of the examination.²

Variability of standards in different schools. — The pages (183-197) in which Professor Wood presents in detail the evidence of the variability in school standards and the fact that the old-type examination, even when administered under the best conditions, does not iron out the glaring unevennesses, are novel and of very great interest. Space can be found here for only one chart (Figure 5, Wood, p. 187) which shows how variable is the attainment of second- and third-year French students according to whether they come from certain schools or types of schools. The vertical bar at the left indicates the scores; the lowest horizontal line indicates the schools, by groups or singly by the numbers assigned to the larger ones.

"The length of each bar above or below one of the average lines indicates the average new-type score of all the students in the school or group of schools described at the bottom of the chart. The bars are not in terms of standard deviation but represent raw new-type scores. The presence of the three average lines, however, enables the reader to see at once the extent of the differences between the achievements of students in the same year-class, but in different schools. The figures at the end of each bar show the number of students whose average new-type score the bar represents.

"For example, the bar in the lower left-hand corner of the chart shows that the 358 French II students from the senior schools of the state had an average

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 179-180.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172, 178, 181 and Chart 33.

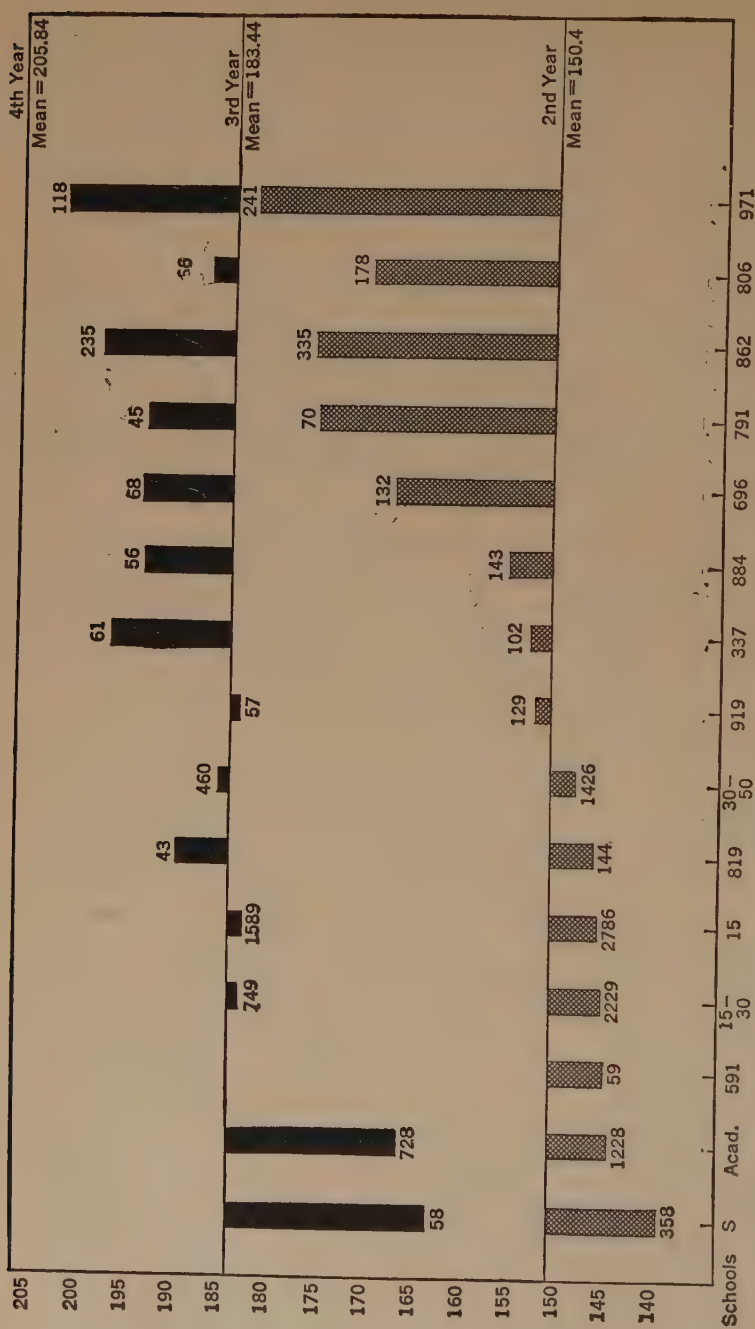


FIGURE 5. — Graphs of the new-type average scores of all French students taking the Regents' examinations in June, 1925, in indicated schools and classes of schools. The horizontal lines from which the vertical bars originate are the second- and third-year class averages on a state-wide basis. The bars are in terms of new-type French test scores, according to the score-scale at the left. The schools and groups of schools involved here are those of Table 21 [Wood], *q.v.* The number of students is indicated at the end of each bar. Note that large schools, while usually above average, show marked variations. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

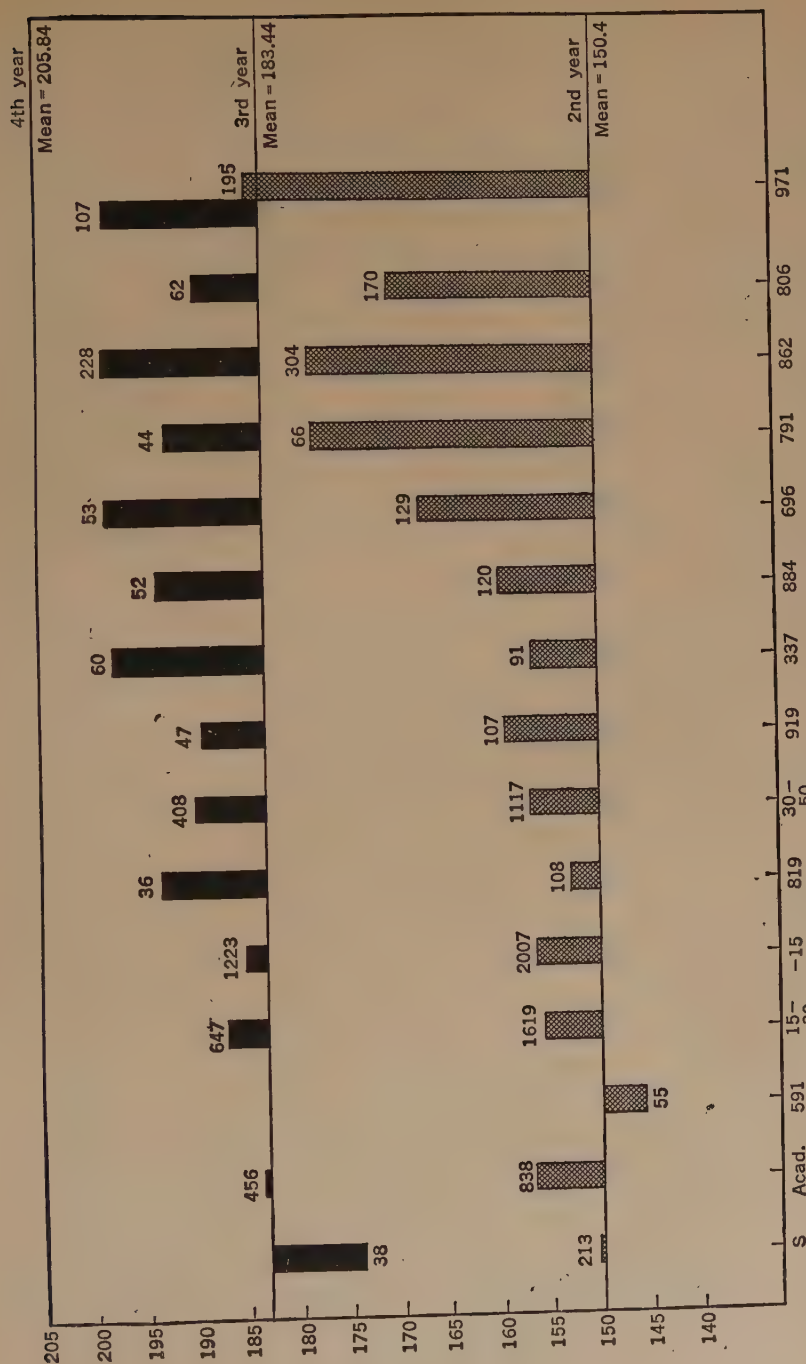


FIGURE 6. — Showing average new-type scores of French students in individual schools and groups of schools who were either passed by the Department reviewers, or who were allowed to be passed on the basis of school ratings which were reviewed only by the sampling method. This chart parallels Chart 37, and should be read in connection with Charts 37 and 39. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

new-type score of approximately 139, which is eleven points below the French II state-wide average; the long bar rising from the second-year average line at the extreme right end of the chart shows that the 241 French II students in school 971 had an average new-type score of about 181, which is 31 points above the state-wide French II average, and only two points below the state-wide French III average. The relative positions of the group of senior schools and of school 971 is practically the same with regard also to French III students" (*ibid.*, p. 189).

To exemplify graphically the standing in new-type scores of students passed by the old-type part of the examination, Professor Wood provides an additional chart (No. 38, p. 188), reproduced here as Figure 6, which brings out the following facts:¹ the average of the French II students passed from school 971 was above the state-wide new-type average of senior school students passed in French III. The new-type scores of the French II students passed from school 971 were more than a year above the average of the students from school 591. The averages of the French II passed students from three schools were above the average of the French III passed students from the group of senior schools. The variability of standards is further illumined by another chart (No. 40, p. 192), reproduced below as Figure 7:

(The chart) "shows that the middle 50% of the students *failed* in school 954 are entirely above the middle 50% of the students *passed* in school 931. More than a quarter of the students *failed* in school 954 are above the average of those *passed* in that school by the old-type examination. In school 973 more than a quarter of the students failed achieved higher scores than the lower third of those that passed. Nearly three-quarters of the students failed in 954 are above the state-wide average and about a third of the students passed in school 931 are below the lower quartile of all French II students who took the Regents' examinations in June, 1925" (p. 193).

Data gathered by the Study. — When we come to an analysis of the situation made by Henmon² we find a significant harmony with the evidence supplied by the Wood study. Wood's testing was confined to one state, whereas the Henmon data were drawn from all over the Union and furnish even more striking examples of malclassification and of variations in standards between schools. The harmony between the results of the two studies tends, of course, to corroborate both.

Basis of the evidence. — The Henmon data are derived from an administration in the United States to approximately 5000 secondary students in French, 3300 secondary students in German and 4800 secondary students in Spanish in schools widely distributed geographically. The French test

¹ The old-type portion of the examinations was scored by teachers in the various schools involved; the new-type portion by clerks following a key. Thus the "passes" or "failures" were conditioned not only by the necessarily subjective scoring entailed by the old-type questions, but also by the severity or the laxness of grading that prevailed in the different schools. When to this we add the varying standards of preparation in different schools, it is not surprising that old-type ratings when compared with new-type scores should exhibit the anomalies that are brought out in the Wood study.

² *Achievement Tests in the Modern Foreign Languages*, *passim*, and especially Chapter VI.

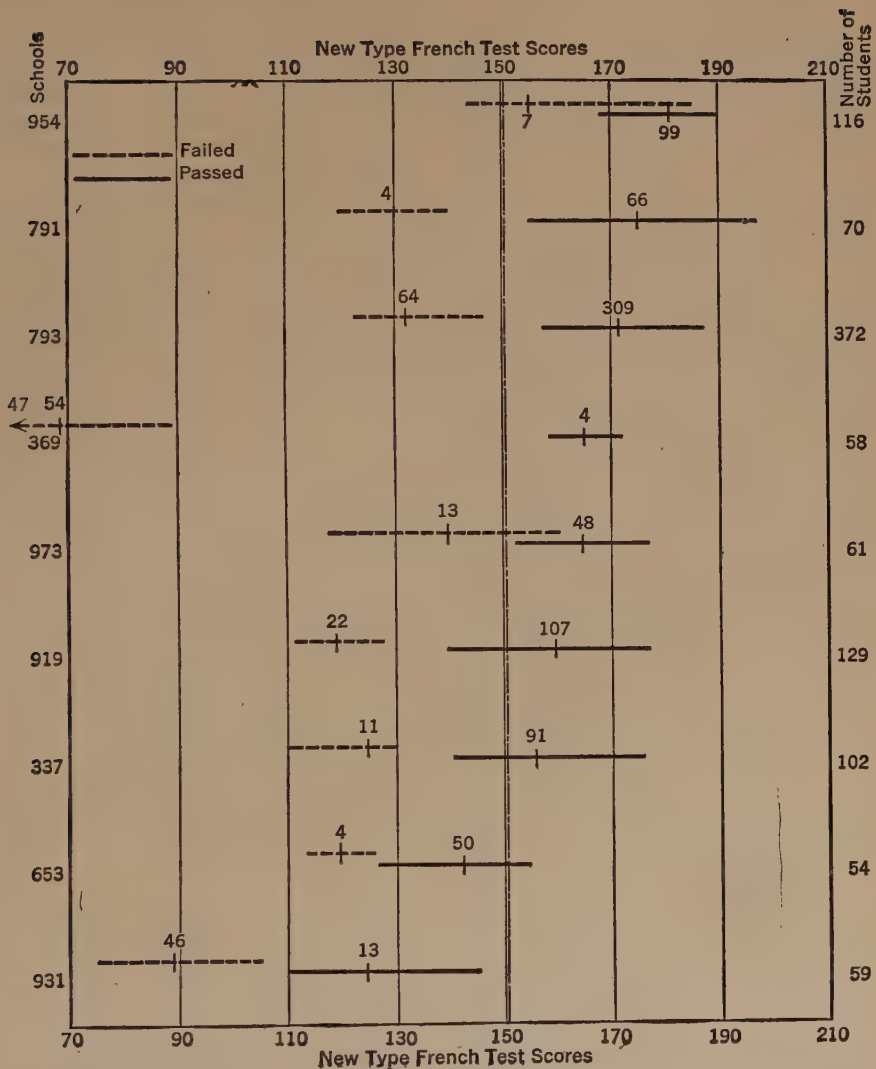


FIGURE 7. — Showing for indicated schools the medians and interquartile ranges of new-type scores in French II. The school identifications appear at the left; the numbers of passed and of failed students are indicated just above the interquartile range lines, and the numbers of both passed and failed students are indicated at the right. The vertical dash-dot line indicates the state-wide average of all French II students, both passed and failed. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

was administered also on a large scale in Canada and in England.¹ A glance at the Manuals of Directions of the various tests and the data given there will make it evident that the number of cases at seventh and eighth semesters in secondary school and second and fourth semesters in college could profitably have been increased.²

Overlapping in high school and in college. — In summarizing the evidence in regard to the grouping of students in French classes, Henmon points out, apropos of a scrutiny of the grammar scores:

"The range of performance of high school students after two years of study is from a zero score to a perfect score. . . . A little computation will show that 20 per cent of them reach or exceed the median score of those who have studied French for three years, and that 5 per cent of them reach or exceed the median score of the four-year students. On the other hand, upwards of 9 per cent fail to reach the median score of one year students. . . . In ability in free composition, 21 per cent of fourth semester high school students reach or exceed the median of sixth semester students, and 6 per cent exceed the median ability of eighth semester students."³

The following figures (8, 9, 10 and 11), prepared for the Henmon volume (*op. cit.*, pp. 141-4), illustrate the overlapping in high school and in college in Spanish. They also illustrate graphically the relative achievement in the different abilities in high school and in college, particularly for six semesters at the secondary and for four at the college level. They thus throw light both on the question of overlapping and on the relative rates of progress in the two types of institutions. They show (1) the wide range of attainment at each level (by the height of the columns), (2) the interquartile ranges or the limits that include the middle 50 per cent (by the shaded areas), (3) the curve of growth from semester to semester. An examination of the shaded areas representing attainment in college classes by the middle fifty per cent of each group reveals that the overlapping here is every whit as great as in secondary schools. A similar situation prevails in French and in German.

¹ See *Modern Language Instruction in Canada*, Part II, p. 665 ff.

² The tests have been copyrighted by the American Council on Education and are published by the World Book Co., Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y. Despite the good offices of many, many secondary teachers and of some college teachers, the Committee's efforts were not infrequently unavailing to get the tests administered at the right time to the right students in the right way, and every administration that went awry was just so many cases subtracted from those available for norms, for another semester or even another year must often come around before similar conditions prevailed for testing a group at a given level. The members of the Committee in charge of the testing program too often felt as though they were in the presence of the legendary bronze head pronouncing the solemn words: "Time will be, time is, time was," especially in the case of the few eighth semester students in French and in Spanish who appeared to belong always to the semester that had gone or to the one that was to end three months later. But to those colleagues in secondary school and in college to whom we never wrote in vain are due the warmest thanks of the Committee and the profession as a whole, for without their aid the testing campaign would have failed miserably and one of the chief undertakings of the Study would have been rendered abortive.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 131-2.

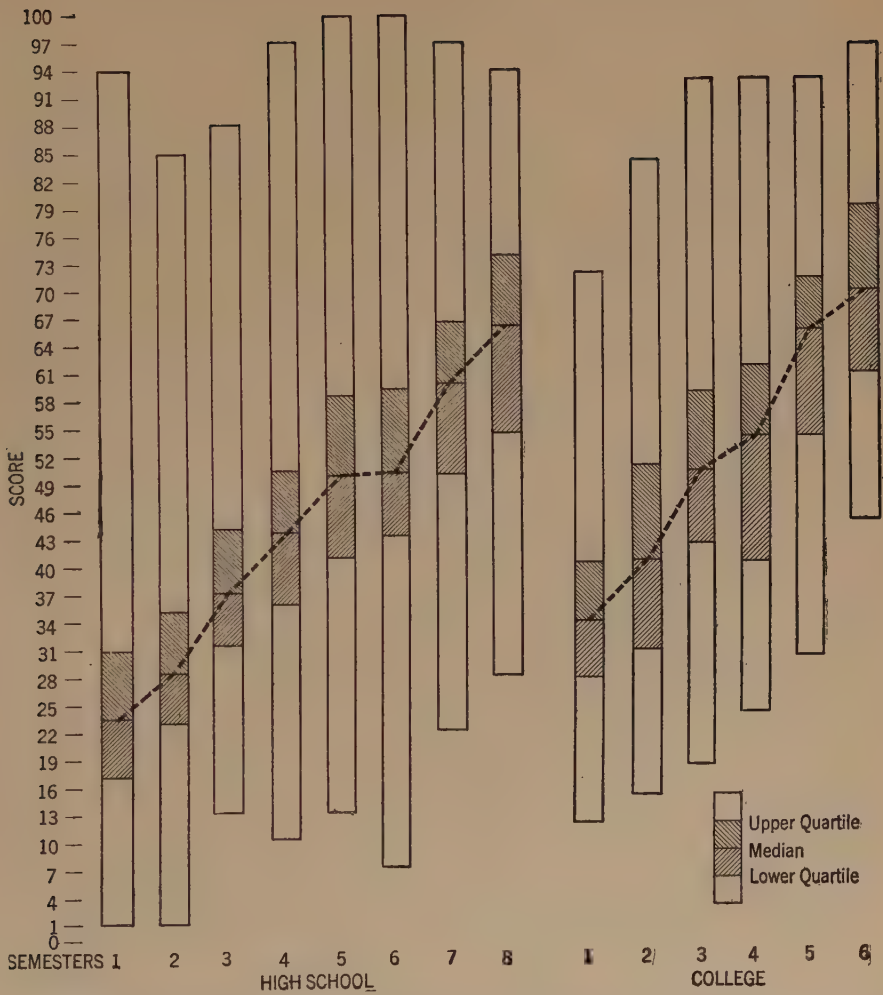


FIGURE 8. — Showing overlapping, variability and growth curves in Spanish vocabulary — United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

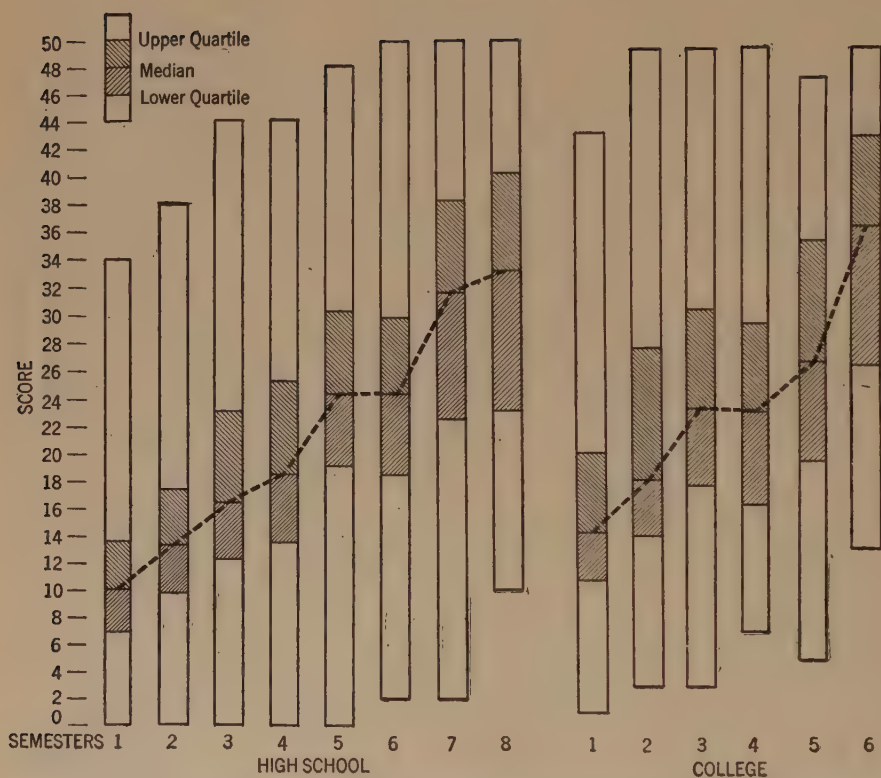


FIGURE 9. — Showing overlapping, variability and growth curves in Spanish grammar — United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

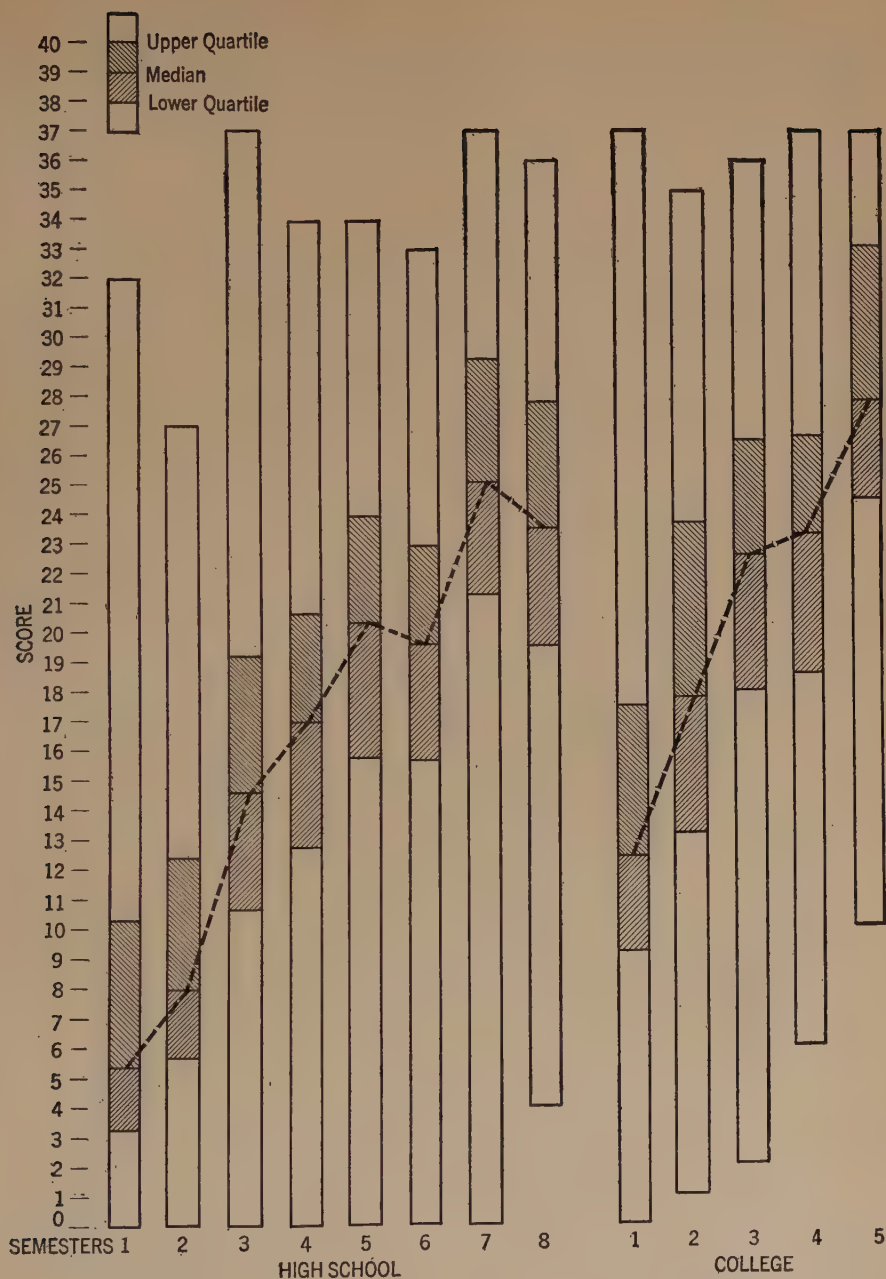


FIGURE 10. — Showing overlapping, variability and growth curves in Spanish silent reading — United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

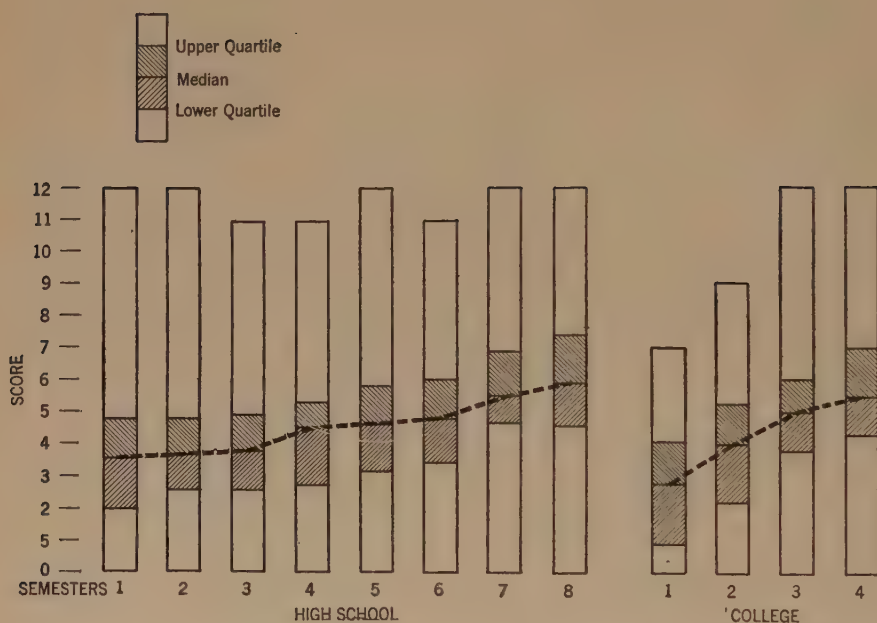


FIGURE 11. — Showing overlapping, variability and growth curves in Spanish composition — United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

Table 28 from Henmon's work (p. 147) shows for Spanish the per cent of students in each semester in high school and in college who reach or exceed the median of the semester above or who fail to reach the median of the semester below them. The upper line applies to the former group; the lower line to the latter.

TABLE 28

ALPHA SPANISH TESTS

SHOWING FOR EACH TEST IN THE UPPER LINE THE PERCENTAGE OF EACH SEMESTER-GROUP REACHING OR EXCEEDING THE MEDIAN OF THE NEXT HIGHER SEMESTER-GROUP AND IN THE LOWER LINE THE PERCENTAGE OF EACH SEMESTER GROUP FAILING TO REACH THE MEDIAN OF THE NEXT LOWER SEMESTER GROUP. (Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 147).

HIGH SCHOOL									
	SEMESTERS								
	Per cent	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Vocabulary .	above	31	19	28	27	51	25	32	
	below		23	15	29	10	51	25	34
Grammar . .	above	28	30	42	27	50	20	45	
	below		26	30	41	23	50	30	46
Silent Reading	above	32	15	37	27	54	14	64	
	below		22	15	34	32	56	18	53
Composition .	above	48	45	34	37	45	26	47	
	below		49	49	46	48	47	27	48

COLLEGE								
	Per cent	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	
Vocabulary	above	24	26	39	20	32		
	below		31	19	47	24	39	
Grammar	above	33	38	51	35	21		
	below		28	27	51	37	26	
Silent Reading	above	24	29	46	14			
	below		21	24	47	19		
Composition	above	27	30	36				
	below		32	29	38			

It will be noted that those portions of the classes which, in terms of the Alpha Spanish test, belong in a higher or in a lower semester, amount to 76 per cent of all students tested for sixth semester vocabulary, 70 per cent of those tested for sixth semester grammar, 70 per cent for sixth semester reading, and 73 per cent for sixth semester composition. The variations in seventh semester are more striking still, and similar remarks could be made

of the French and the German tables.¹ In regard to the French situation as a whole we may cite the following:

"... as measured by the vocabulary test, 1492 of the high school students out of 4856, or 31 per cent, are in achievement a semester or more above the level at which they are classified, and 1080, or 22 per cent, are a semester or more below the level at which they are classified. This would mean that as measured by the test, 2572 students, or 53 per cent, are misclassified by a semester or more. A similar analysis for grammar shows that 1180 students out of 4472, or 26 per cent, are above their level of classification by a semester or more, while 1051, or 24 per cent, are below their classification in achievement by this amount. This indicates that 2231 students, or 50 per cent, are misclassified by a semester or more as measured by the grammar test. In silent reading 1177 students out of 4173, or 28 per cent, read at a level above their classification by a semester or more, with 980 students, or 22 per cent, reading below their classification by a semester or more. This shows a misclassification of 50 per cent.

"In composition the overlapping is still greater; 1133 students out of 2714, or 41 per cent, are above their classification, while 809, or 30 per cent, are below . . . giving a misclassification of 71 per cent.

"The cumulative evidence is very strong that 50 per cent of the students tested are erroneously classified, and should be a semester or more above or below the classifications in which they are found. A similar analysis, which is not reproduced in detail, will show that 25 per cent are erroneously classified by a whole year. The situation in the colleges is quite as bad."²

The percentile curves reproduced below from the same source present the situation graphically and enable readers to make numerous comparisons for which there is no space here. This device serves to locate an individual or a class on the curve, not in terms of the scores themselves, which would not admit of direct comparisons, but in terms of percentile ranks, that is, of the position of a student *in respect to the others in his group*.³ A percentile rank of 90 means that a student is in the upper 10 per cent of his group, and exceeds 90 per cent of them in score.

"When we are able to say . . . that a score of 25-27 in the French vocabulary test — maximum 75 — gives the student a rank of 94 in a hundred if he is in the first semester of French, a percentile rank of 76 if in the second semester of study, but a rank of 5 if in the sixth, the scores begin to have concrete significance. Again if a student in the first semester of French makes a score of 15-16 in the grammar test, it places him in the 93 percentile, or in the top 7 per cent of high school students. A second semester student should have a score of 21-22 to occupy a comparable position, and a fifth semester student should have a score of 41-42."⁴

In view of the fact that Henmon (pp. 149-172) gives the percentile curves for French, German, and Spanish both in secondary school and in college, only the charts for high school French are reproduced here. In

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 145-147.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 145-146.

³ Cf. Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 157 ff.

⁴ Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 148. Readers will observe that in the Manuals of Directions of the A. C.*Alpha tests the percentile ranks are all calculated, making it possible, for example, to compare directly the scores of third and of sixth semester students, and to distinguish whether the latter do as well for their semester level as the former do for theirs. They will also be interested to note the directions given there and in Henmon (pp. 173-174) for converting test scores into class grades on a scale of 100.

every case the vertical axis represents the possible scores on each test and the horizontal axis the percentages from 0 to 100. The vertical line rising from the 50 percentile point intersects the curve for each semester at the median score point for that semester, which may be determined by placing a straight edge at the intersection point and noting the point at which it cuts the vertical axis. In order to determine the per cent of any semester group that falls above or below the median of any given semester group, place a straight edge upon the given curve at its intersection with the 50 per cent line and observe what portions of the other curves lie above or below the straight edge. If this is done in the case of the curve for sixth semester French vocabulary (Figure 12) we note that the scores of 6 per cent of the third semester group lie above this point, that 15 per cent of the fourth semester and 34 per cent of the fifth semester groups are also above this point, while about 17 per cent of the eighth semester vocabulary scores lie below the sixth semester median.

A similar analysis of the curves for French grammar (Figure 13) discloses the fact that 10 per cent of the third semester group, 18 per cent of the fourth semester group, and 31 per cent of the fifth semester group are up to or above the sixth semester median, while about 22 per cent of the eighth semester scores lie below.

An examination of the percentile curves for French reading (Figure 14) exhibits even greater unevennesses in classification. If the straight edge is placed at the point where the fourth semester curve cuts the 50 per cent line, we see that the scores of about 3 per cent of first semester students, 8 per cent of second semester students, and 35 per cent of third semester students are up to or above this point, whereas the scores of about 27 per cent of fifth semester students, 13 per cent of sixth semester students, 11 per cent of seventh semester students, and 5 per cent of eighth semester students are down to or below the fourth semester median.

In the case of French composition (Figure 15) about 28 per cent of first semester students equal or surpass the fourth semester median, while 33 per cent of fifth semester students, 21 per cent of sixth semester students, 13 per cent of seventh semester students, and 25 per cent (!) of eighth semester students write no better or write worse.

One would infer from this and from the irregularities in the percentile curves that teachers, as judged by their classification of students, are less successful in appraising progress in writing French than in any other ability, that it is also a difficult task to gauge progress in reading, but (and this is more surprising) that the percentage of malclassified students, when French grammar is taken as a criterion, equal or surpass the errors made when reading ability is taken as a basis, for here 4 per cent of second semester students and 31 per cent of third semester students equal or surpass the fourth semester median; 35 per cent of fifth semester students, 18 per

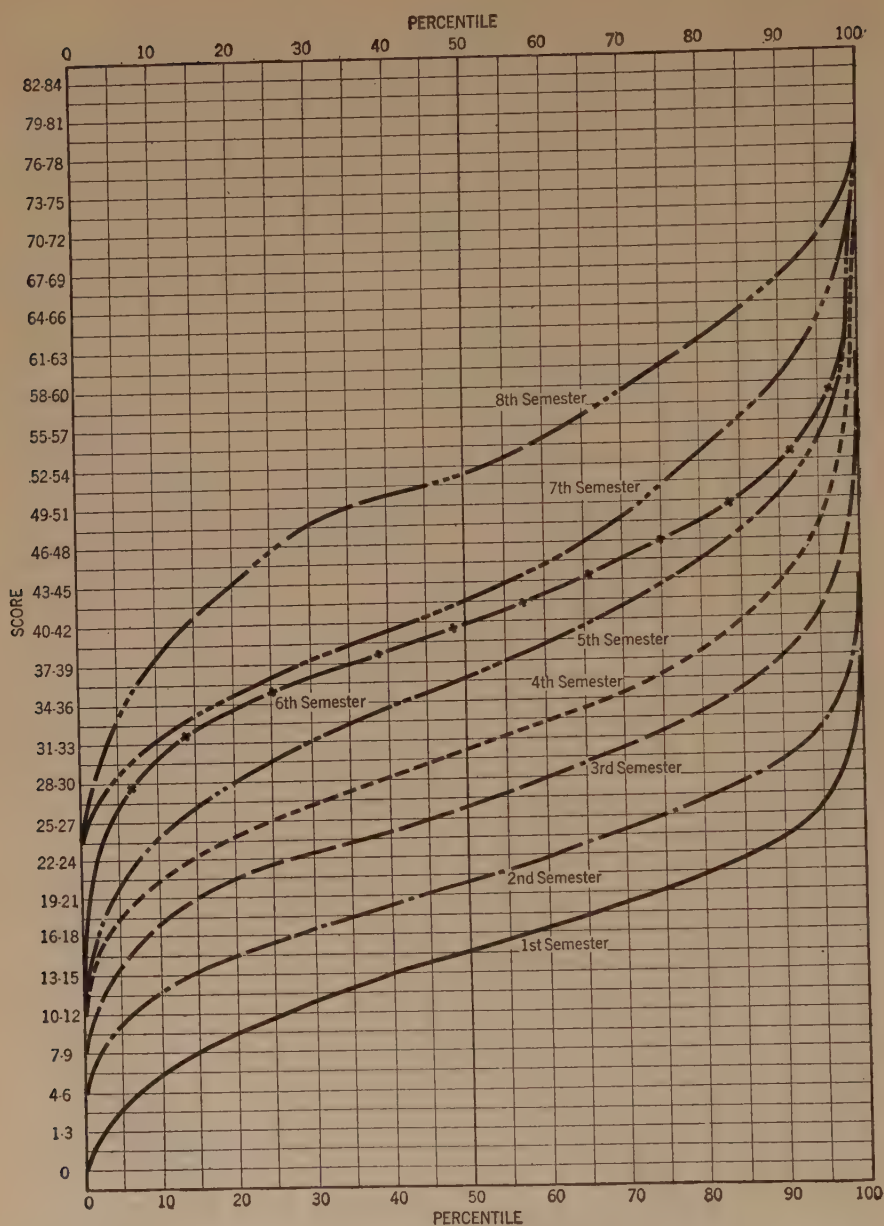


FIGURE 12. — Percentile curves for French vocabulary in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

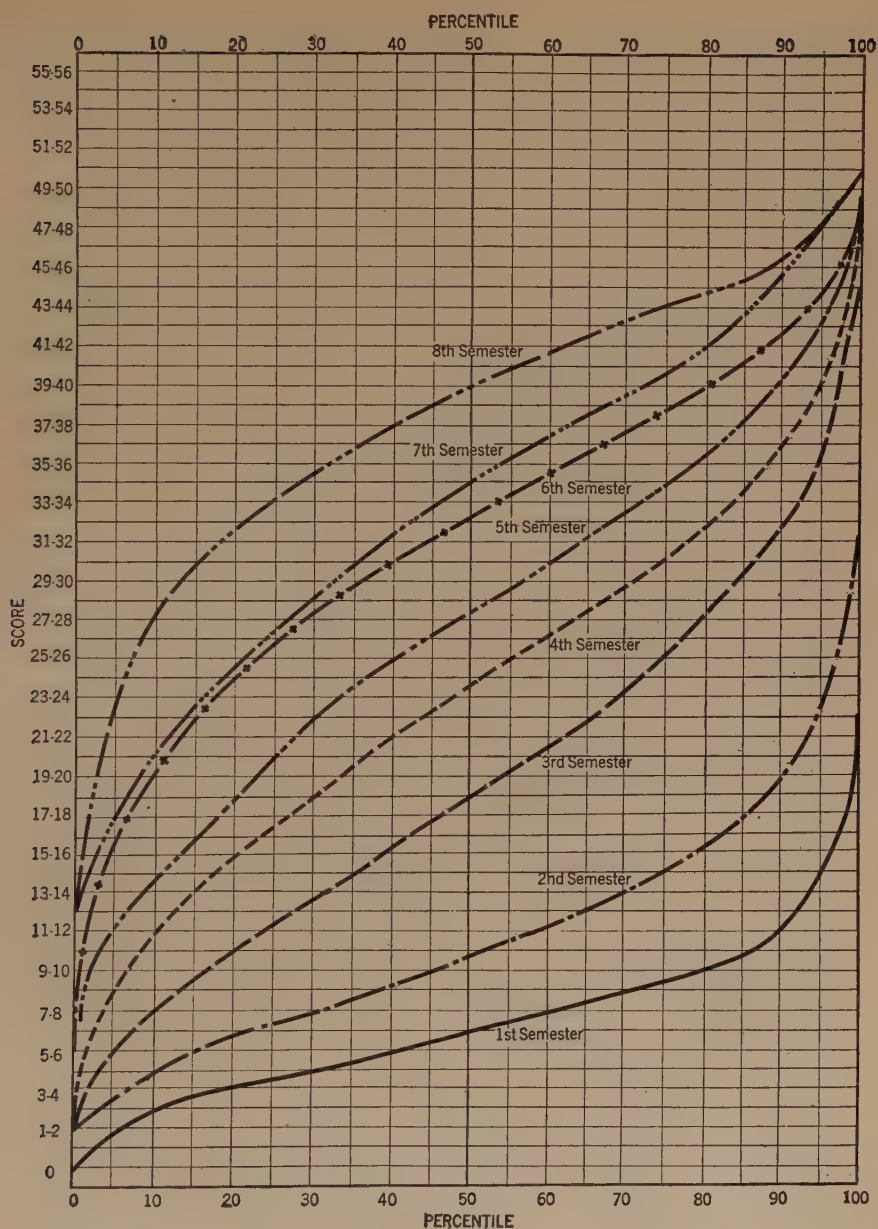


FIGURE 13. — Percentile curves for French grammar in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

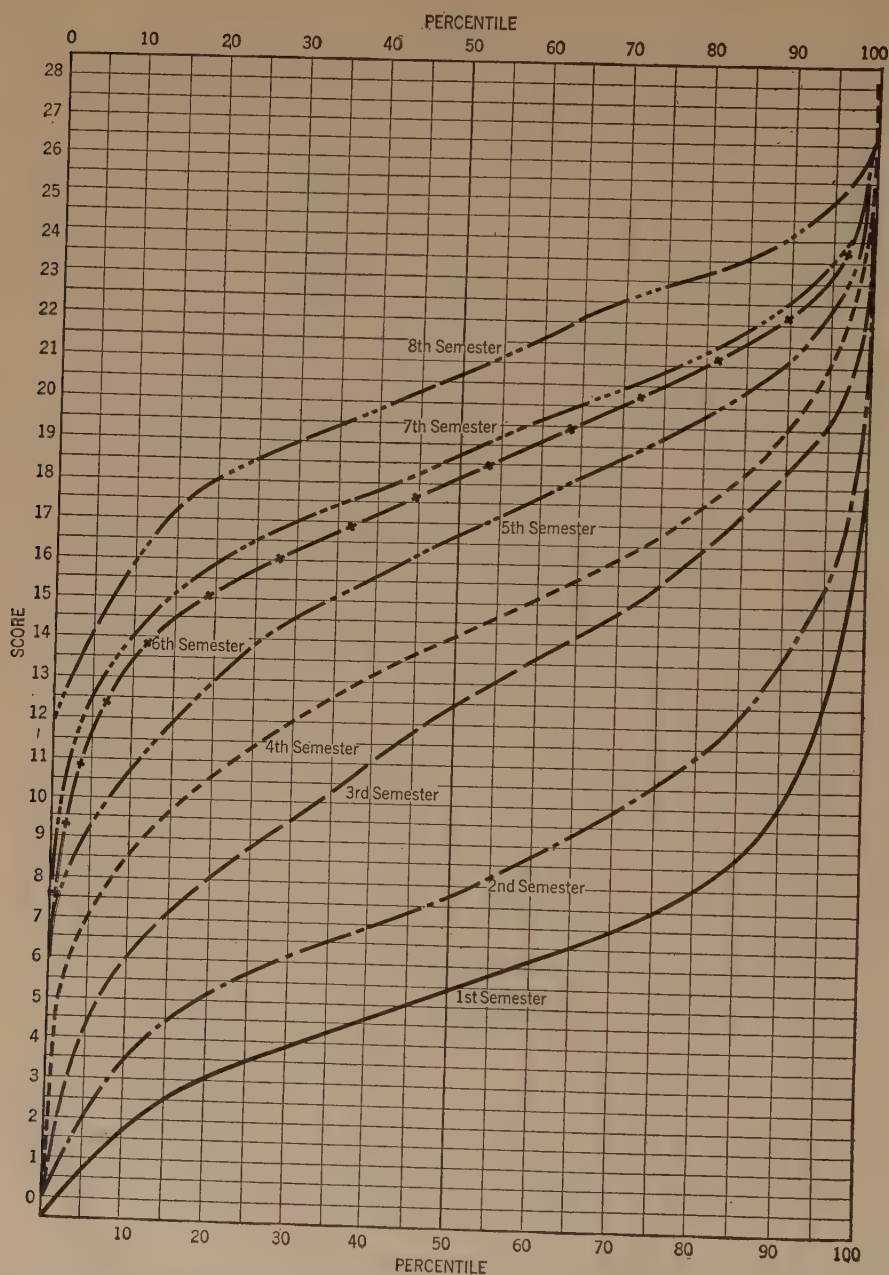


FIGURE 14. — Percentile curves for French silent reading in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

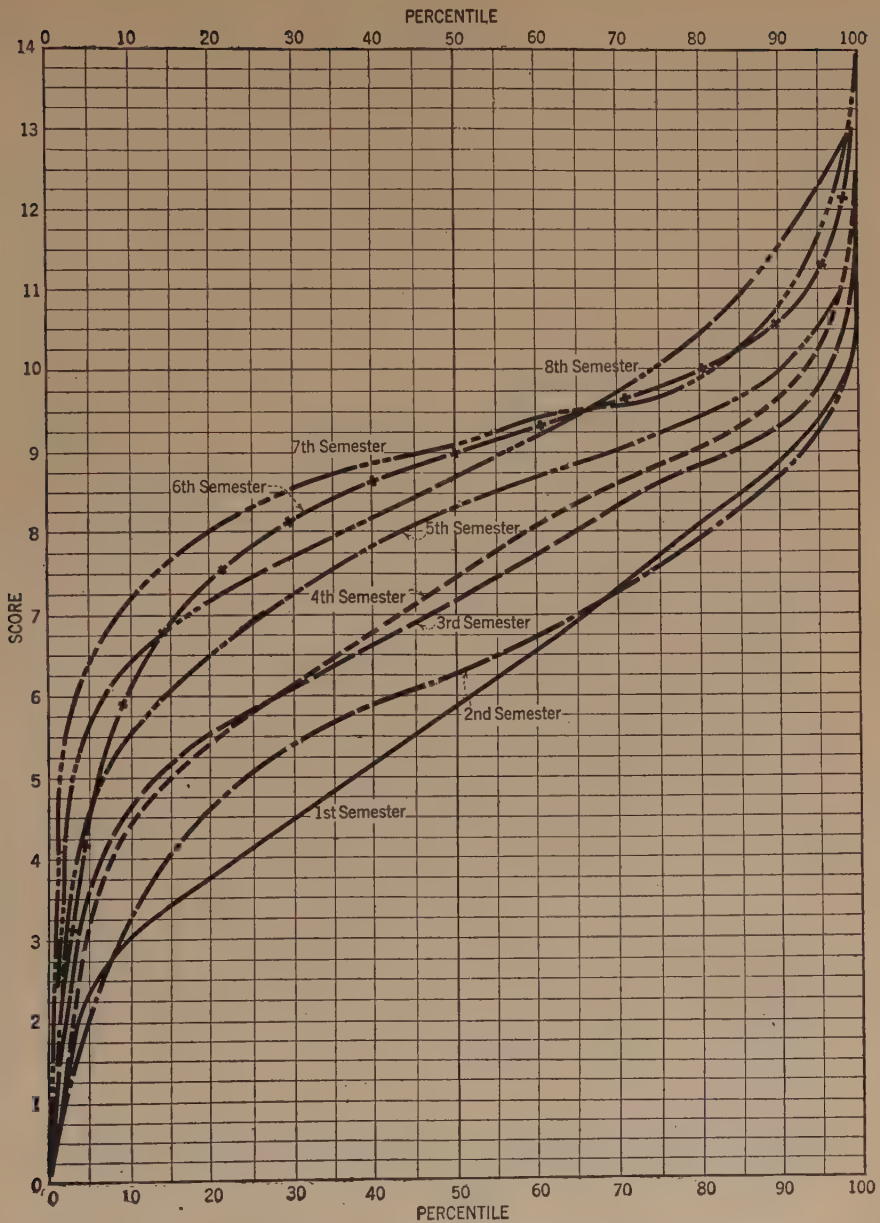


FIGURE 15. — Percentile curves for French composition in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

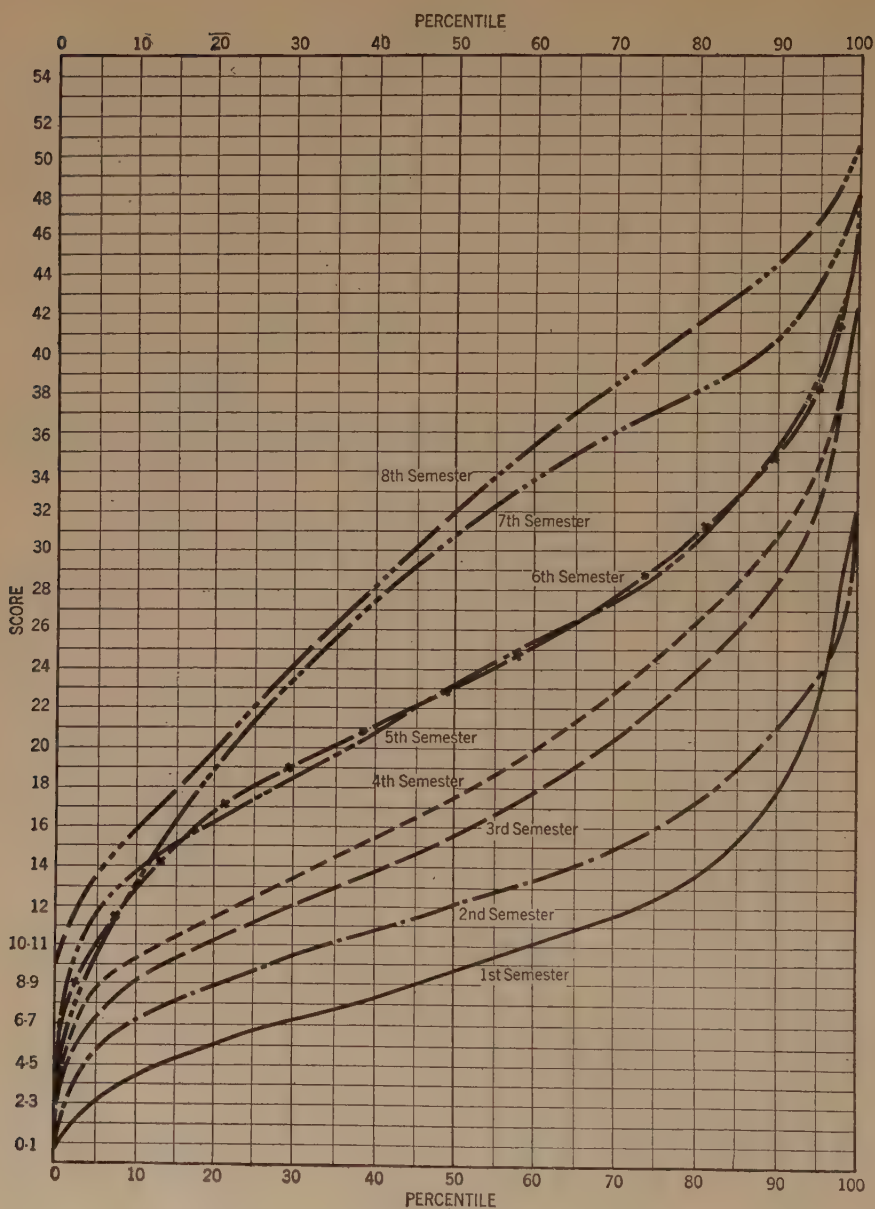


FIGURE 16. — Percentile curves for Spanish grammar in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

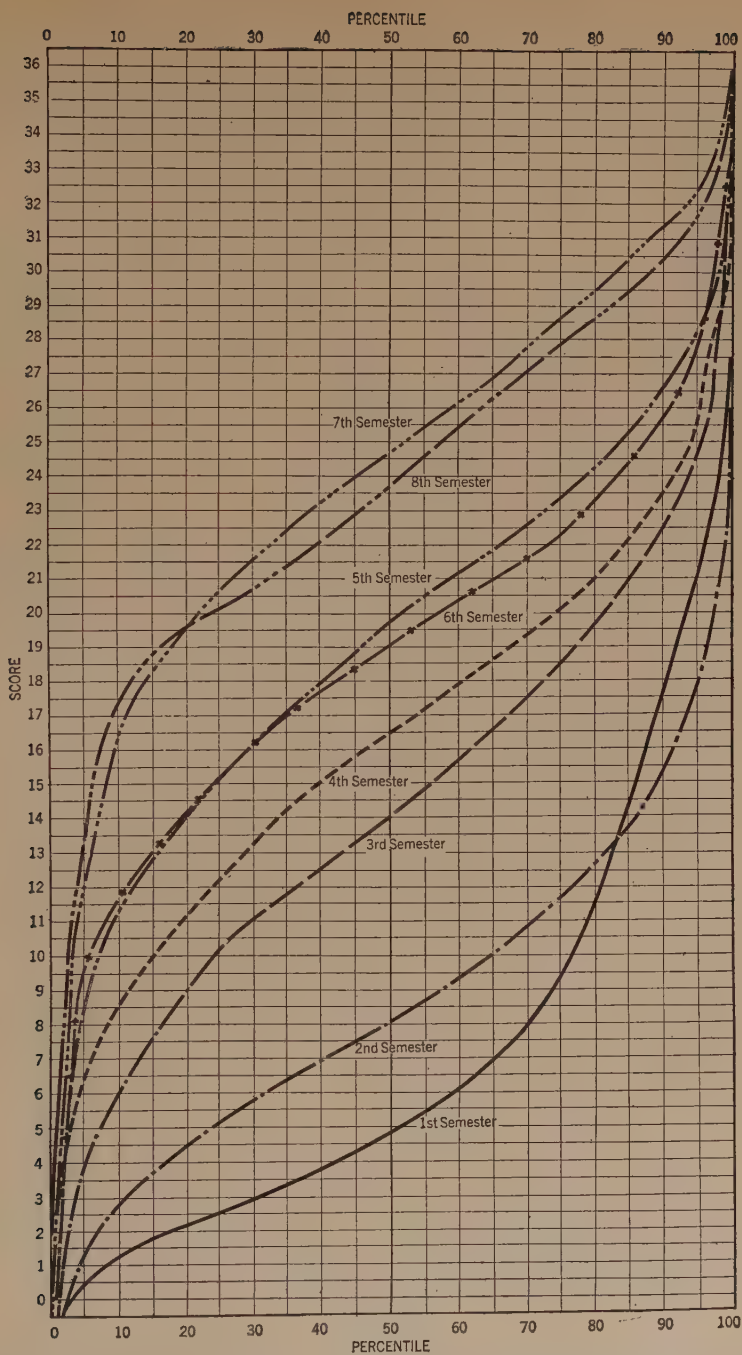


FIGURE 17. — Percentile curves for Spanish silent reading in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

cent of sixth semester students, 16 per cent of seventh semester students, 6 per cent of eighth semester students are no higher or are below the fourth semester mean.

The situation in regard to Spanish grammar is even worse, as shown on Figure 16. Taking the fourth semester median as a point of reference and following the straight edge to the left and to the right, we observe the following facts: Over 1 per cent of first semester scores, 20 per cent of second semester scores, and 42 per cent of third semester scores equal or surpass the fourth semester median; 23 per cent of fifth semester scores, 21 per cent of sixth semester scores, 16 per cent of seventh semester scores, and 13 per cent of eighth semester scores are no higher or are below. To be noted also are the inversions at the fifth and the sixth and at the first and the second semester stages, and the fact that fifth and sixth semester attainment is virtually on a par.

An examination of the chart for Spanish reading, Figure 17, gives rise to similar comments. The curves for the seventh and eighth semesters, for the fifth and sixth semesters, for the first and second semesters are confused. A larger number of first semester than of second semester students surpass the fourth semester median (12 per cent to 8 per cent). More than 35 per cent of third semester scores equal or surpass this point, while 31 per cent of fifth and sixth semester scores, 10 per cent of seventh semester, and 8 per cent of eighth semester scores are no higher or are below.

The composition curves for Spanish are if possible more confusing than the French, as may be ascertained by reference to Henmon (*op. cit.*, Figure 34): 40 per cent of the second semester scores and 42 per cent (!) of the first semester scores equal or surpass the fourth semester median, whereas 33 per cent of the sixth and 12 per cent of the eighth semester scores are no better or are inferior.

The figures given by Henmon¹ but not reproduced here disclose that the college situation is much the same. About 12 per cent of the first semester scores in French grammar equal or surpass the second semester median, whereas 43 per cent of the third semester and 25 per cent of the fourth semester scores are no higher or are inferior. Similarly 10 per cent of first semester scores and 42 per cent of second semester scores equal or surpass the third semester median, while 2 per cent of first semester scores, 28 per cent of second semester scores, and 31 per cent of third semester scores equal or surpass the median fourth semester score. In French reading 35 per cent of the first semester scores are equal or superior to the second semester median. Of the third semester scores, 12 per cent, and of the fourth semester scores, 8 per cent, are down to or below this point.

College teachers of French differentiate between the various semester stages in terms of composition no more successfully than their secondary

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 153-156, and Figures 19, 20, 21, 22.

colleagues. Forty-two per cent of the first semester group equal or surpass the second semester median; 33 per cent of third semester and 25 per cent of fourth semester scores are no higher or are inferior. It would be possible to utilize these charts for other interesting observations: to determine, for example, what percentage of each semester group belongs, as rated in terms of the American Council Alpha tests, in a higher or a lower semester than where now classified. We could also determine whether the present mal-adjustment is especially marked in vocabulary, or in grammar, or in reading, or in writing. These curves, as it has already been suggested, make more apparent than the raw scores would do the cases in which the mal-classification is so marked as to involve actual inversions of scores between higher and lower semester groups.

The following tables exemplify the conversion of test scores into percentile ranks for first semester German and for fourth semester French (Tables 29 and 30).

Irrespective of the question of the variability of teachers' marks, — the correlation in this case with the test scores is fairly high — it is interesting to note in Table 29 the contrast between the standing of Pupils 14 and 15 as judged by the test scores and by class grades. The

TABLE 29

SHOWING THE CONVERSION ON THE ALPHA GERMAN TESTS INTO PERCENTILE RANKS (Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 174).

1ST SEMESTER

PUPIL	SCORES IN TESTS				TEACHERS' MARKS	PERCENTILE RANKS				
	V	G	R	C		V	G	R	C	Av.
1	21	13	7	3	90	50	48	47	34	45
2	9	13	..	4	91	14	48	..	64	42
3	25	13	3	3	91	59	48	20	34	40
4	27	11	4	3	80	59	32	20	34	36
5	16	12	8	3	75	23	32	47	34	34
6	20	9	3	.5	50	39	20	20	10	22
7	17	13	6	.5	85	39	48	33	10	32
8	31	11	9	3	83	69	32	59	34	48
9	33	18	..	4	95	74	69	..	64	69
10	18	11	9	.5	60	39	32	59	10	35
11	33	14	9	4	96	74	48	59	64	61
12	18	9	6	3	80	39	20	33	34	31
13	31	25	..	4	95	69	88	..	64	74
14	3	5	5	3	80	2	5	33	34	18
15	7	5	3	3	80	6	5	20	34	16
16	6	14	8	3	90	6	48	47	34	34
17	18	11	12	3	70	39	32	68	34	43
18	24	14	15	3	80	50	48	81	34	53
Class Median	19	13	7	3		Av. 41.7	39.1	43.0	36.7	41

Correlation between Teacher's Mark and Average Percentile Rank in the Tests $r = .60$

TABLE 30

SHOWING THE CONVERSION OF SCORES ON THE ALPHA FRENCH TESTS INTO
PERCENTILE RANKS (Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 175).

FOURTH SEMESTER

PUPIL	SCORES IN TESTS				TEACHERS' MARK	PERCENTILE RANKS				
	V	G	R	C		V	G	R	C	Av.
1	35	29	15	9	70	68	71	58	79	69
2	47	35	15	9	70	94	88	58	79	80
3	47	48	19	11	90	94	99.6	88	98	95
4	42	26	15	9	80	85	54	58	79	67
5	38	37	19	8	85	78	92	88	58	77
6	22	15	12	5	75	14	21	30	13	20
7	40	37	15	9	85	85	92	58	79	79
8	54	38	17	10	90	97	92	76	93	90
9	45	45	16	9	80	90	99	68	79	84
10	29	23	17	7	80	40	47	76	43	49
11	45	41	20	10	90	90	97	92	93	93
12	34	44	16	11	78	68	98	68	98	81
13	27	34	10	8	80	26	83	16	58	43
14	42	41	19	9	85	85	97	88	79	85
15	44	40	16	10	70	90	95	68	93	84
16	42	34	16	10	85	85	83	97	98	88
17	40	42	14	9	75	85	97	48	79	75
18	32	45	16	9	75	55	99	68	79	70
19	36	39	14	11	90	68	95	48	98	75
20	50	40	19	12	90	96	95	80	99.7	95
21	44	45	15	11	75	90	99	58	98	86
22	45	41	18	11	90	90	97	83	98	92
23	46	44	13	6	85	94	98	38	27	64
24	38	33	20	7	80	78	83	92	43	72
25	45	41	16	..	80	90	97	68	..	85
Class Median	42	40	16	9		78	87	68	73	74

latter place them well up in the group, whereas the former put them at the foot. These two pupils may not have tried their hardest on the test, or other unfavorable conditions may have prevailed. The percentile ranks show where they stand on this test with respect to the others, and only a study of their cases as individuals could disclose whether their teacher was as badly misled in rating their class work as it would appear from a comparison of their test scores¹ with class grades. Observe also the inversion in the standing of Pupils 16 and 18 (Table 29) as determined by teachers' marks and by their percentile ranks and of pupils 2 and 6 (Table 30).

Differences in achievement by classes. — Henmon's study of the scores made by different classes in the same and in different schools² brings out some interesting comparisons which are best revealed by charts in which each dot represents a class and is located on the chart with reference to

¹ Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-175.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 176-177.

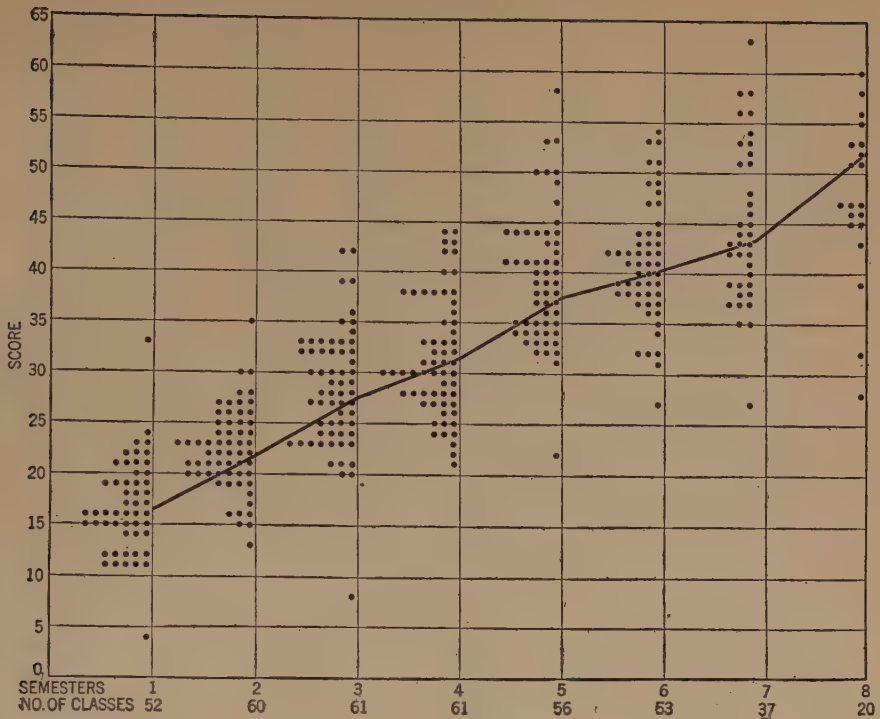


FIGURE 18. — Variations in class medians for different schools and classes for French vocabulary in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

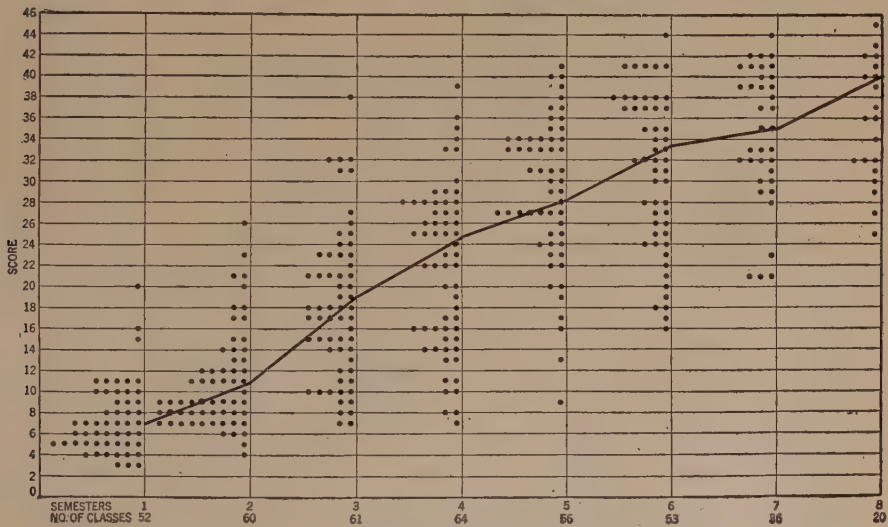


FIGURE 19. — Variations in class medians for different schools and classes for French grammar in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

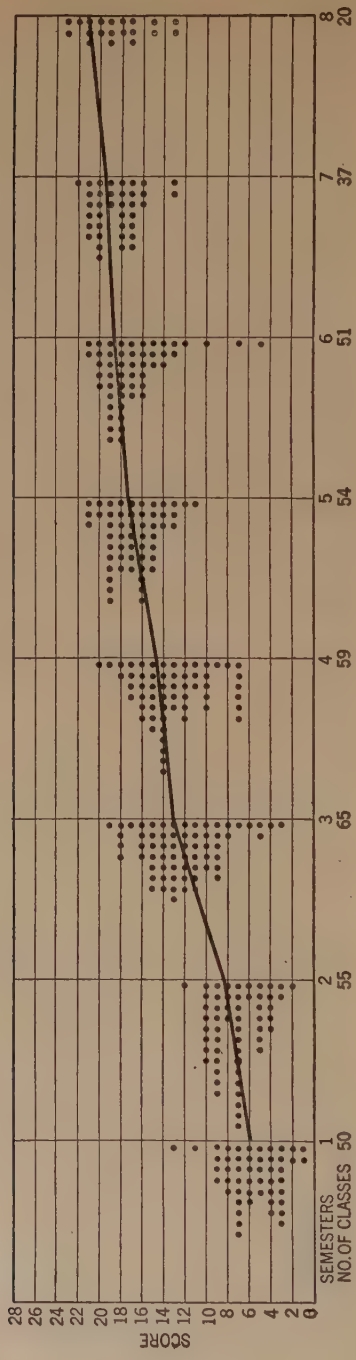


FIGURE 20. — Variations in class medians for different schools and classes for French silent reading in the high schools of the United States. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

the relationship between the class median and the curve that represents the national norm at the various stages.¹ These charts, which are taken from the Henmon volume and based on data given in full, illustrate such facts as these: In French vocabulary (Figure 18), 7 out of 52 first semester classes are above the second semester median; 20 out of 61 third semester classes are above the fourth semester median; 6 out of 61 fourth semester classes are above the *sixth* semester median. In French grammar (Figure 19), 5 of the 64 fourth semester classes are *below* the second semester median, while 23 are below the third semester median and 4 are *above* the sixth semester median. On the reading test (Figure 20), 6 first semester classes out of 50 are above the second semester norm, whereas 15 of 55 second semester classes are *below* the first semester norm in reading ability as rated by the test. Nine out of the 51 sixth semester classes, 2 out of the 37 seventh semester classes, and 2 out of the 20 eighth semester classes are, by the same rating, below the norm for fourth semester in reading French.

As the dots in the charts represent classes, each one located with regard to the others by the average of the percentile ranks as derived from the class norms on three units of the test — vocabulary, grammar, silent reading, — almost any comparisons may be made, many of which serve to illustrate the thesis developed by both Wood and Henmon, as well as by other authorities, “the fallacy of measuring achievement in the modern languages in terms of time spent in the classroom, and the need for some objective measure for purposes of placement,”² and the further fact that, “it is easily possible to find schools and classes that take six semesters to accomplish what others will accomplish in four semesters.”³ Table 31 further exemplifies this.

Table 31 gives the percentile ranks of classes from 16 schools on the Alpha German test at 6 semester levels. Observe how low are the third, fourth, and fifth semester classes in School 15 as compared with School 9, and how inferior the sixth semester class in 15 is, even in relation to the other classes in the same school. Schools 47 and 10 are also uniformly inferior. In fact the *fourth* semester group from School 29 is relatively greatly inferior to the *first* semester from Schools 30 and 26.

Uses of standardized tests. — It would be possible to make hundreds of other comparisons of this sort, both for the secondary school and the college, all illustrating in most convincing fashion the complete failure of our present measuring instruments to bring about the classification of students on any other basis than that of time spent in the course. It is almost useless to comment on the extent to which all our prerequisites to graduation from secondary school and for entrance into college illustrate

¹ *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 193–199, and Figures 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48 and 49.

² *Ibid.*, p. 200. See Henmon, Figures 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49 for similar exhibits for French composition and for all the units of the German and Spanish tests.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

TABLE 31

PERCENTILE RANKS OF DIFFERENT SCHOOLS AND CLASSES SHOWN ON ADMINISTRATION OF THE ALPHA GERMAN TESTS

SCHOOL	1 SEM.					2 SEM.					3 SEM.					4 SEM.					5 SEM.					6 SEM.				
	V	G	R	C	Av	V	G	R	C	Av	V	G	R	C	Av	V	G	R	C	Av	V	G	R	C	Av					
1	57	50	60	54	57	71	85	82	76	82	68	73	65	40	62	82	97	93	92	91	77	89	72	69	76					
8	91	90	69	48	92	95	88	85	50	80	97	87	50	66	69	95	91	60	69	78	76	79	70	70	74					
9	15	31	24	31	29	11	44	32	50	34	23	32	22	40	30	23	32	22	40	30										
10	32	25	18	49	31	30	21	34	28	28	65	51	46	68	58	45	13	35	49	35										
11						30	21	34	23	27	21	23	20	20	20	24	37	22	28	24										
15						34	30	25	36	56	79	67	58	65	67	73	75	70	81	75	40	45	34	53	43					
17	42	42	46	43	47	55	56	56	36	52	79	67	58	65	67	73	75	70	81	75	17	17	22	12	14					
20						63	63	47	81	63	52	78	61	49	60	60	62	53	55	73	10	12	14	20	14					
21						71	51	67	83	68	42	21	36	60	39	62	53	55	73	60										
24											53	57	57	70	59	41	75	61	45	57	40	39	35	46	49					
26	51	51	47	75	56	72	67	73	64	72	72	67	73	64	72	51	51	47	79	55	40	39	35	46	49					
28	42	39	43	37	41	54	59	51	46	53	38	32	24	27	29	27	26	24	39	28	77	70	52	50	65					
29						38	32	24	27	29	38	32	24	27	29	27	26	24	39	51	40	65	41	48						
30	40	36	46	74	51	56	56	56	56	56	38	32	24	27	29	27	26	24	39	40	50	69	58	74	61					
31						41	56	42	70	53	41	56	42	70	53	46	54	68	53	55	40	46	95	49	49					
47	39	36	25	59	39	32	44	32	41	37	32	44	32	41	37	32	43	41	63	45	34	22	30	50	34					

¹ Cf. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

this tendency: units, points, credits — they all mean so many hours a week for so many weeks, and the evidence goes to show that the classes of some schools do in the two-year “elementary” course in modern languages more than others do in four years. No one would be more interested to know this and to profit by it for the improvement of his work than the teacher whose classes are inferior, whether it is because of inferior pupil material or of other unfavorable conditions. The discussion in the foregoing pages has brought out very considerable evidence illustrative of the state of affairs. The more detailed presentations of Henmon and Wood exhibit it more fully, and give still more conclusive evidence of the need for a different practice with regard to testing from the one we have followed thus far, which fails altogether to differentiate between the performance of students on any basis established by relative attainment along a scale of known difficulty.

It would be almost as unwise to expect too much from the kind of instruments with the aid of which the Henmon and the Wood data were secured as it would be to ignore them altogether. They have their deficiencies and much experimentation will be necessary to make them more effective. They can be trusted for diagnostic purposes to a limited degree only, and are not to be employed in the analysis of individual differences without due caution, although even here they are highly useful in detecting symptoms, and may be of great service for placement as well as for revealing group differences. Hence, if judiciously utilized, they will greatly aid teachers in making their classes more nearly homogeneous, in enabling them to compare the performance of their classes at different levels, with each other and with classes elsewhere, or of other years. In this way they will aid powerfully in reducing the abuses, the unevennesses, and the gross inequalities which, as the evidence shows, are rife in the modern language field at the secondary level, whether in secondary school or in the junior college.

Figures 21, 22, and 23 reproduced below from Henmon’s volume¹ demonstrate in graphic form how we may ascertain the relative performance of classes at different semester levels in the same school or in different schools by reducing the raw median scores made on each of the four units of the test by each class to percentile ranks and then determining a percentile rank for each class by taking the average of these four. They illustrate at once the wide differences in the quality of the output in different schools and in different classes in the same school.

Figure 21 enables us to compare with one another the achievement at a given time of a French class at each semester level in each of seven schools. A straight line for a given school would indicate that each class in that school does as well comparatively as the class below or the class above.

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 203-205.

Third semester attainment in School 1 is relatively slightly below that of the second semester class and there is a slight regressive tendency in fifth and sixth semesters, but all the class medians are above the 55 percentile point. The classes in School 11 tend to increasingly high grade performance at all stages except the second and sixth semesters, but the class medians for the second, third, and sixth semesters are low. Schools 5 and 8 definitely lose headway, relatively speaking, as the classes become more advanced, but the level of performance in School 8 is in every case above the median. The performance in School 3 at the different stages is

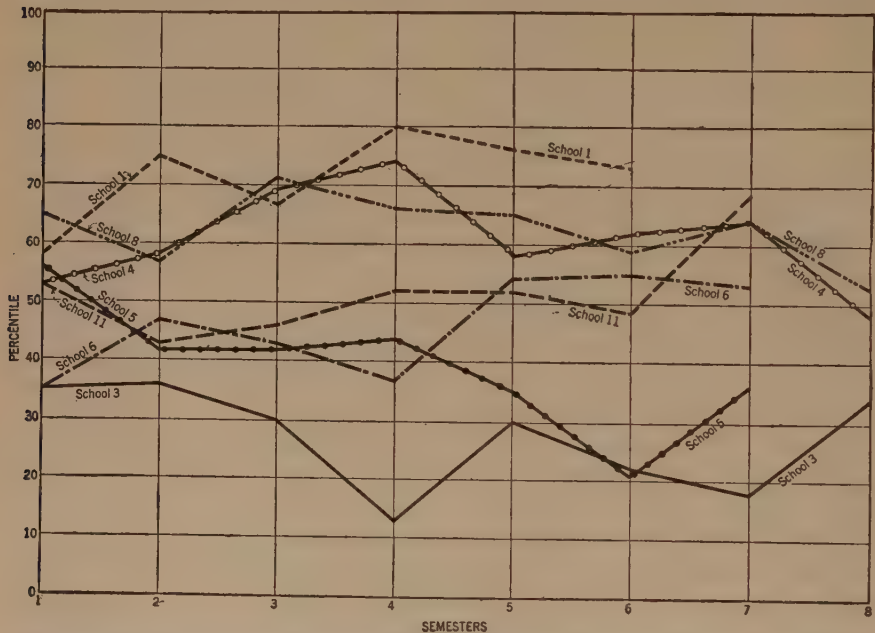


FIGURE 21. — Consistency of average percentile ranks of different classes in the same schools — French. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

very uneven and invariably at a low level of achievement. The fourth semester class in this school is relatively far below the first and second semester classes. Here, then, are three schools that are distinctly superior in classification of students and in language attainment and four others of which the contrary is true.

The corresponding chart for German (Figure 22) shows a queer fluctuation for School 11, with one fair class out of four, a steady relative lessening of the pace in School 24, and in School 1 an almost uniform relative increase in power as the classes advance, and always in the upper half of the diagram. Four of the 10 schools show low grade achievement while the notably superior accomplishment in School 8 can evidently not be regarded

as comparable in any respect to the results achieved in Schools 10, 11, and 15. In fact the German instruction in Schools 1, 8, 9 is so far above the work in the other schools as to represent a distinctly superior undertaking.

A similar exhibit could be made for Spanish and, when desired, the exhibits for a larger number of schools could be projected on the same

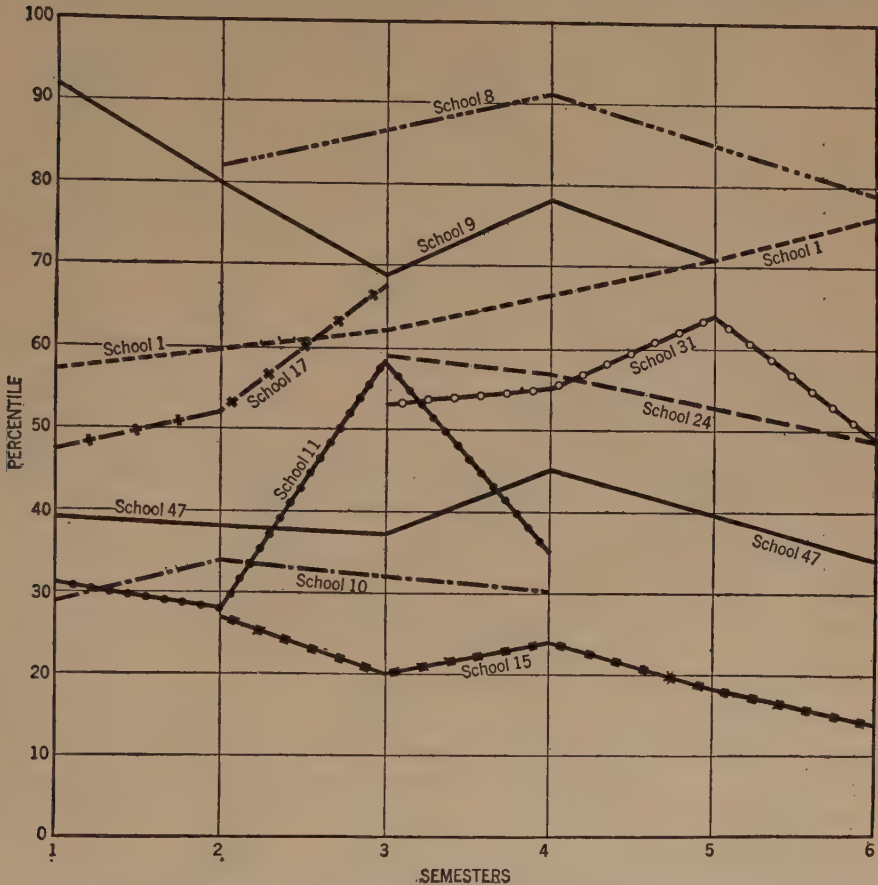


FIGURE 22. — Consistency of average percentile ranks of different classes in the same schools — German. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

sheet. These figures appear, however, to illustrate sufficiently the point at issue, which is, that only if one applies a common measure can the accomplishment in different classes and in different schools be appraised with any confidence.

The relative performance in French in eight schools at the second, fourth, and sixth semester levels on the four units of the Alpha test is shown graphically in Figure 23

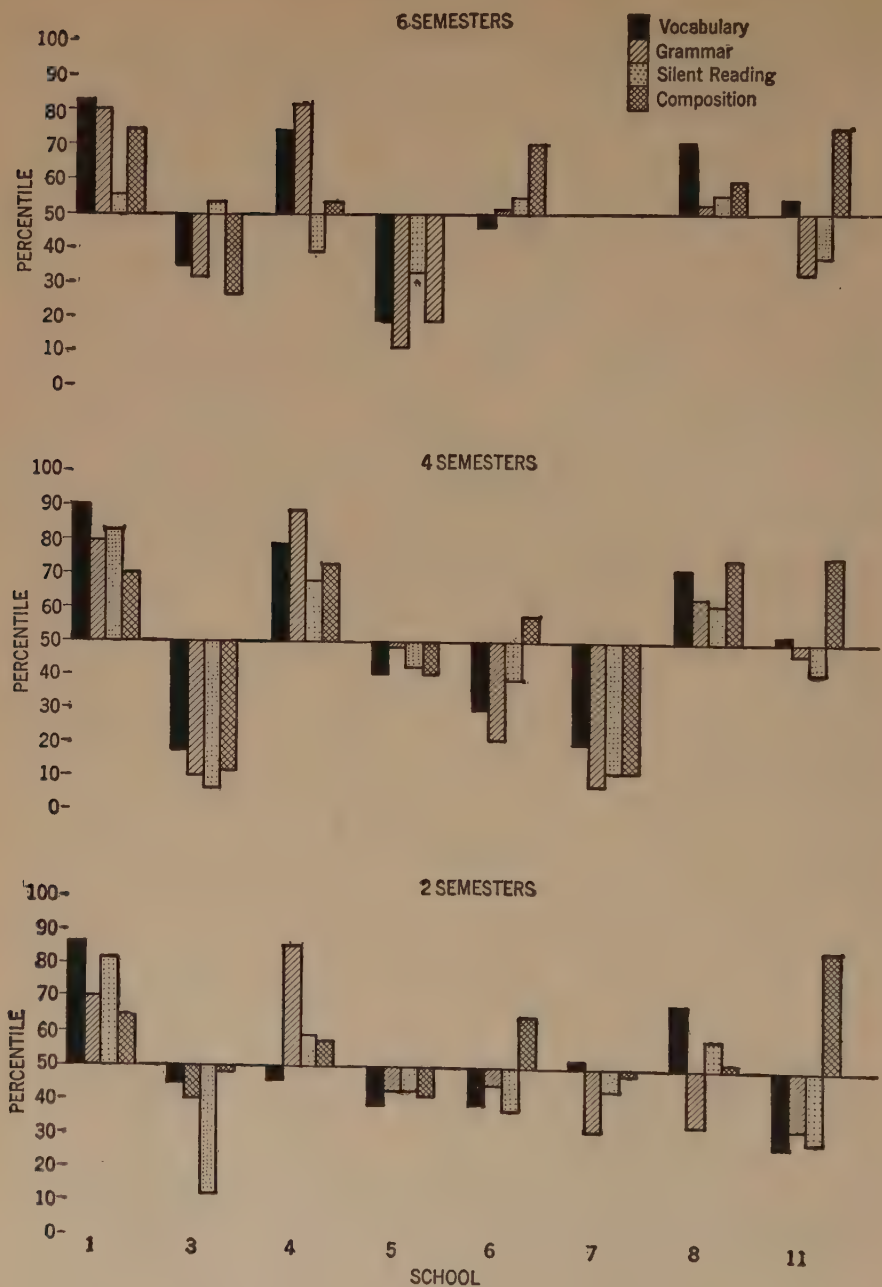


FIGURE 23. — Showing uniformities and unevennesses of different classes in the same school in the different parts of the Alpha French tests. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

The base line in each case is the 50 percentile line for each semester stage, and the columns by their relative position above or below the base line and by their respective lengths illustrate the performance in the four units of the test (vocabulary, grammar, reading, composition), each with respect to the semester norm and each with respect to each other.¹ The second semester group in School 1 shows a fairly uniform attainment in all units of the test and all above the median. This is true also for this school in fourth semester, and, except for lower relative performance in reading, in sixth semester. School 3 is on the wrong side of the horizontal line at each level except for reading in sixth semester. It displays very erratic conduct in second semester and somewhat more uniform deficiencies in fourth and sixth. The showing for School 5 resembles that for 3. School 11 exhibits the striking inconsistency of high scores in composition at all three levels and poor performance in the other units. The testimony is so contradictory that the situation in this school would need special investigation before one could use the evidence of this chart for other than merely illustrative purposes.

The exhibit for German (Figure 24) suggests much the same observations. Schools 8 and 9 are superior at all the levels tested. Schools 10, 11, and 15 are uniformly on the wrong side of the horizontal line.

It is difficult to interpret such an exhibit as that contained in these charts. The variations must be due in part to differences in emphasis by teachers, to inequalities in pupil abilities, to defective classification, to variations in the training and effectiveness of teachers and, in some cases, one would almost suspect that the test was not properly administered. How else may we explain, for example, the high record in School 11 in French composition as compared with the scores obtained in grammar and in vocabulary? At the same time it must be said that there is very good reason to believe that composition scores in general show a low correlation with scores on the other units of the test.²

Such a display as the above does not, unfortunately, explain the causes of the variations, nor does it dictate the remedies therefor in a specific case. A complete knowledge of the particular circumstances would be a necessary condition for devising remedial measures, but it is clear that if the scores made by successive classes in a school or in a school system were thus graphically projected, the resulting exhibit would constitute the first step in any survey of relative attainment in a school or in a group of schools, and would therefore provide the starting point for the serious study of a given situation.

¹ For a discussion of the correlation between the scores on the different units of the tests, see Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-97.

² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

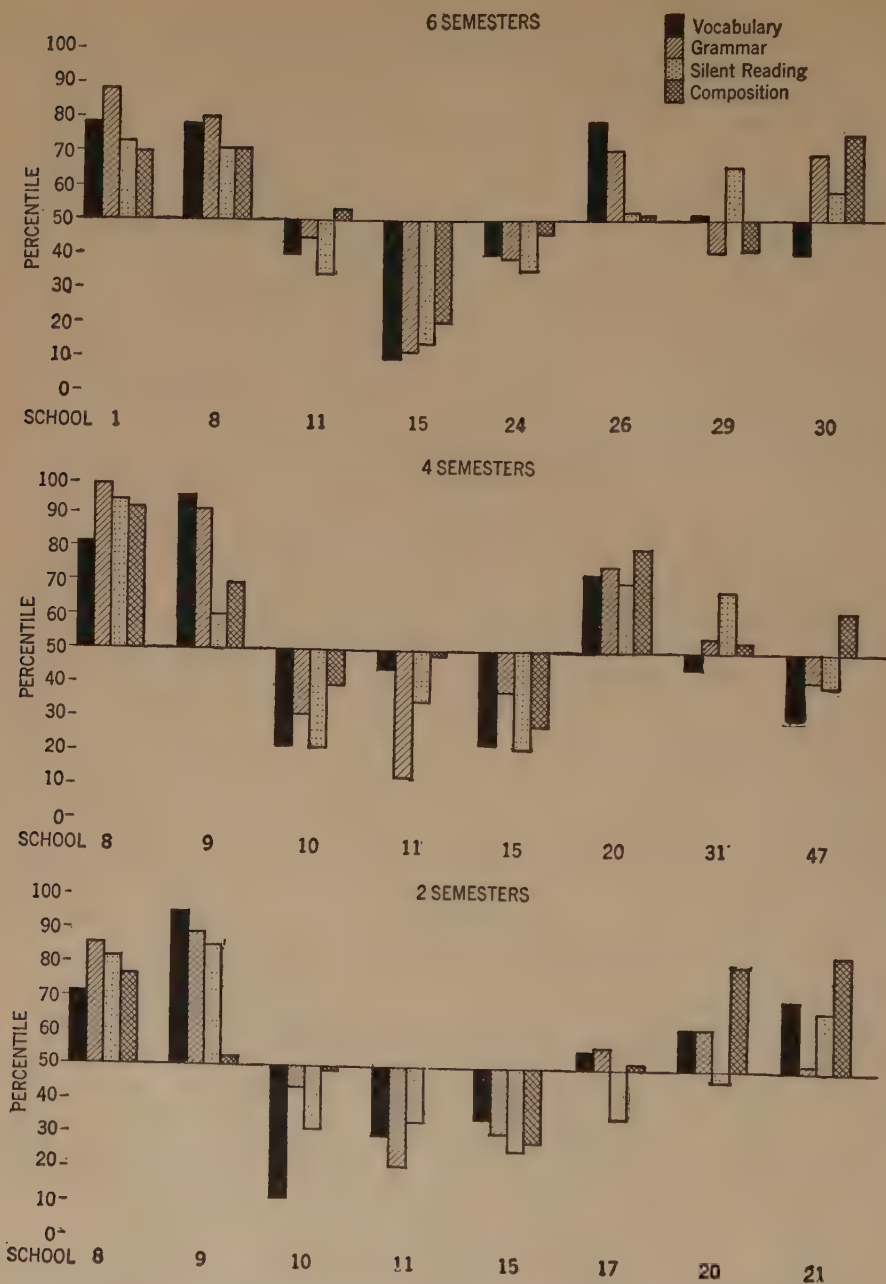


FIGURE 24. — Showing uniformities and unevennesses in different schools in the different parts of the Alpha German tests. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

DESIRABLE CHANGES IN TESTING PRACTICES

The present procedure and its defects. — Modern language teachers, like most others, habitually conceive of examinations as taking an inventory of the extent to which a given body of material has been learned by a given group of students. We appear to assume that students know nothing beyond what they have “had,” and that it is unfair to test them for power to perform in language unless the test is limited to the items that have been treated somewhere in the particular course that they are following. Teachers appear to think also that time devoted to testing is time subtracted from learning, and prefer to push ahead without interruption for most of the semester, taking a few weeks toward the end to review for an examination at the close on the particular items to which that semester has been devoted. Morrison, to whose book reference has already been made,¹ describes the process and, in describing, condemns it.

“The ground once covered, it is ‘reviewed’ and the recitation form of testing the absorption of material is summarized in another test, of the same sort and of the same order, known as the ‘examination.’ As the examination period approaches, the teacher and the supervisor alike often exhibit the height of scientific ingenuousness by creating a situation which is skillfully calculated to obscure the very symptoms which they are presumably seeking to discover. The performance stereotype is in full charge in the teacher’s mind. Such being the case, it is perfectly logical to review and prepare for examination in order that performance may be as satisfactory as possible. . . . In so far as the pupil knows that he is going to be examined and prepares definitely for the examination, it should be evident . . . that what he has actually acquired and made part of himself must be hidden under the mass of memoriter material which he has made available and ready for examination. He may know, but the examination affords no evidence that he does know. He may have failed wholly to acquire any real product in learning, and yet success in recalling content is taken as evidence of learning” (pp. 37–38).

In this passage, of course, the author is generalizing. On another page he refers more specifically to foreign language:

“Here the pupil spends a year or more, commonly three years, in pursuit of a long series of assignments which . . . present innumerable exercises in illustration of the usages . . . which are treated. Now if the teacher were asked to . . . list the real learning products in view, he would probably enumerate: (1) Ability to read the language; (2) Possible ability to speak the language; and (3) Comprehension of the language structure. But are these products all the while in the foreground . . . ? Not if the ground-to-be-covered theory is consistently followed. Rather is the performance of the daily exercise the important thing. . . . He (the pupil) succeeds on the examination in proportion as he can recall the details of the immense mass of experience which he has encountered. Improvement in reading power, let us say, is seldom tested, and if tested, corrective instruction is rarely undertaken” (p. 43).

In these passages the author is condemning what he calls the “lesson learning” practices that prevail in our classrooms and dominate in our

¹ *The Practice of Teaching in Secondary School*, Chapter III.

examinations, and advocates in contrast thereto the ideal of mastery, which involves the organization of the material into learning units, and the application in the technique to be employed of what he calls the "mastery formula": "Pre-test, teach, test the result, adapt procedure, teach and test again to the point of actual learning" (p. 79). "Testing," he adds further on, "is a part of the teaching process. Just as no system of technique and no method will take the place of the teacher's insight, acumen . . . and fidelity to professional duty, in exploration, presentation . . ., so will effective testing depend upon the same qualities" (p. 299).

A discussion of Morrison's general position and the application of all the principles involved would lead us outside the field of the present topic. He has in mind teaching technique in general and uses the foreign language illustration only as one of the cases with which most teachers are familiar, but his insistence on the need of frequent testing of the student's power to do the things that will show to what extent he is progressing toward the main goals with relation to some established standards, instead of testing merely his retention of the forms or rules that have been studied during a given period of time, is wholly relevant to the matter in hand. The practice as he describes it obtains not only in the case of class examinations given at the end of a semester, but also in preparation for passing the examinations set by regular accrediting agencies, such as the College Entrance Examination Board. It is customary to analyze the examinations given in preceding years, to have students learn the forms and practise writing the exercises and solving the problems, in the expectation that similar forms and constructions will recur. It may be added that the results have seemed to justify the expectations, for certain schools are noted for their success in coaching their candidates for this kind of examination. Nevertheless the system as a whole does not, in many schools, succeed in producing classes the members of which are anywhere near on the same level in their ability to read and to write. Still less has it developed practices of grading the work of students in such a way that we may, with any confidence, accept the outcome of a given semester in one school as having definite relation in terms of language knowledge with what is attained in another. Of these two statements abundant proof has already been given.

It follows from what has already been said that it would be profitable to introduce, as a part of our work of instruction, more systematic and more frequent testing of progress toward the objectives that we agree upon, and to utilize the results both to diagnose the strength or the weaknesses of the individual members of our class for re-teaching purposes and, with the aid of the school administration, to re-classify them in accordance with the progress they have made and the point of attainment they have reached. Since learning a language means, in part at least, the

learning of usages and of grammatical constructions to the point where they contribute to the main purposes, our testing can not ignore such matters, but it should be, as regards grammar, functional in technique rather than formal and should test ability to read passages known to be of progressive difficulty rather than passages chosen merely from the texts being studied and of entirely unknown relative difficulty with respect to each other as well as with respect to the standards of higher or of lower class levels. It is no easy task to devise tests of these abilities; it is harder still to devise tests of ability to understand, to speak and to pronounce, on the basis of which to compare the oral attainment of different students in different or even in the same classes, but the roughest kind of testing specific achievement for placement and progress is better than none, and much can be done if one is systematic and follows a uniform procedure.

The value of standardized tests for placement. — The most obvious way of testing for placement is to utilize some of the standardized tests already referred to, or others that may be developed. The American Council Alpha and Beta tests in French, German, and Spanish — the Beta group designed especially for junior high schools — and the Cheydleur French Grammar test, Selection Type, have been fully standardized. The Alpha group examines for knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, reading and composition. A composition scale is used for scoring the composition unit. The Columbia Research Bureau tests and the Iowa Placement tests for grammar, vocabulary and reading, which, like the others, are uniform, comprehensive and objectively scorable are also available. All these tests are to be administered to all students at the secondary level, in high school or in college, and the scores made are to be judged with respect to norms of performance and percentile rankings already established for the different semesters on the basis of a wide administration. Those students who score well above or below the norms established for their stage of advancement and whose general academic standing is proportionately high or low may well be considered as candidates for a higher or a lower class. As the tests exist in two equivalent forms, two or three administrations during the year to all students in all classes in the languages taught may serve both for placement purposes and as a basis for estimating progress.

The prediction has been made in several quarters that such tests can serve but for a short time because teachers will prepare directly for them in order that their students may make the best possible showing. Such an assertion is amazing. It indicates, in the first place, on the part of those who make it, an astonishingly low estimate both of the intelligence and of the professional integrity of the members of the profession; of their intelligence, because it would be almost sheer waste of time to coach students on the basis of these particular pamphlets; of their professional integrity, because these tests are not intended to be administered by any outside

standardizing agency like the colleges, but by teachers themselves, to measure the progress of their own students and check up their own effectiveness as teachers. If such a test is administered in strict accord with the directions — and if not, the results are, for comparative purposes, valueless — students see the questions for only the few minutes they spend in writing their answers, and if the alternative form, or even the same form, be administered a semester or a year later, the carry-over will be negligible, except as a certain practice-effect results from taking a test of this particular kind. If teachers take up the questions one by one in class at the session following the test, as they often do with the ordinary class quiz on current grammatical topics, they will, of course, render the test wholly useless thereafter for its true purpose. These instruments are, or are meant to be, testing devices, not teaching devices. They have a certain limited diagnostic value, as has been shown above, but their true purpose is to help in ranking students in relation to their own classmates and to the groups below them and above them. This they will do, albeit not altogether perfectly; to attempt to make them play another rôle will mean time wasted. It may be added, moreover, that if any standardizing agency outside the schools, such as the Regents of New York state or the College Entrance Examination Board, were to adopt this type of examination as more suitable to its purpose than the type hallowed by tradition and cursed by modern teachers, it could, without difficulty, construct several different forms by a variety of techniques and involving a variety of material, which would render obsolete the present well known technique of coaching for such examinations.¹

The new-type examination has, for placement purposes, as a point of departure and a means of control in experimentation, so many and such overwhelming advantages in comparison with the old type that when teachers become familiar with its uses, they will regard it as an indispensable instrument in appraising the progress of classes and of individuals and for estimating relative attainment in their schools with respect to others. It is probable that city systems provided with research agencies will consider the construction of such tests in all subjects for local purposes as one of their most important tasks; and any agency that may be developed for general research and experimentation in the field of modern language teaching will certainly have a division devoted to the construction and standardization of tests according to approved techniques, as well as to experimentation with new and perhaps superior types. Nothing would

¹ Additional alternative forms of the American Council modern language tests will undoubtedly be constructed in the not too distant future. It can not be too strongly asserted, however, that the two forms already available may be used repeatedly with the same students at intervals of a semester or even somewhat less if the directions for administration are carefully followed. The only way whereby they may be rendered useless for testing purposes is to review these particular forms with classes. It can not be too often repeated that tests like the American Council group are testing instruments and not teaching devices and will prove to be of real value only if used for the purpose for which they were devised.

do more, not even the discovery of a reliable prognostic device, to develop homogeneity in classes and to promote uniformity in standards of attainment between different schools, where now, as we have had ample proof, chaos reigns. The great obstacle to the construction of such tests lies in the care and expense and labor necessary to assemble suitable materials, to try them out properly by student performance for order of difficulty, and for clarity and economy of presentation, and to administer the test in preliminary form to a sufficiently large number of students at the different levels in order to secure the data needed for standardization. The collaboration of language teachers with experts in the field of tests and measurements is usually essential for the observance of the proper precautions, linguistic and technical, but when the task is done, the test may be administered by any one who can read and follow directions and scored by any one who can use a key. Since this topic is more fully dealt with in the volumes by Wood and by Henmon, we shall have no more to say about it except when necessary for the discussion of class organization.¹

It may be well, however, before passing to the next topic, to call the attention of school administrators to the desirability, even the necessity, of providing the funds necessary to furnish their teachers with measuring instruments of this character. The additional expense will be amply justified by the advantage of using such devices as an aid in organizing classes and in establishing standards of relative achievement, both with other schools and within a given school. It would appear as legitimate to employ school money for such a purpose as for providing scientific laboratories and gymnasium apparatus, and if experience is to be trusted as a guide, it is as impossible without some such instruments to secure the evidence on the basis of which the present lamentable state of affairs may be corrected as to teach without books or to survey land without a measuring rod. But it is not enough merely to purchase and to administer tests of this character. The scores must be tabulated and studied in some such way, though less elaborately, as in the exhibits reproduced from the Wood and the Henmon monographs; and in the case of large schools and systems, the assistance of some one skilled in the handling of testing data is almost essential for the proper interpretation of the results.

"Home-made" new-type tests and their uses. — It is probably neither necessary nor desirable, however, that testing be confined to the administration of standardized tests of the kinds mentioned. Teachers will not lightly abandon their desire to see how well their classes perform on the

¹ For fuller discussions of this topic see Wood, *Measurement in Higher Education*, World Book Co., 1923, Chapters 7 and 8; Ruch, *Improvement of the Written Examination*, Scott, Foresman & Co., 1925; Ruch and Stoddard, *Tests and Measurements in High School Instruction*, World Book Co., 1927. The much lighter cost in time and in money of scoring the new-type test is discussed by Wood, *New York Experiments with New-Type Modern Language Tests*, pp. 311-312, and by H. E. Ford, *Modern Language Instruction in Canada*, II, pp. 829-830, "Publications of American and Canadian Committees," Vol. VII, University of Toronto Press, 1928.

particular subject matter studied during a fortnight or a month. Our remarks on this topic might properly be placed in the discussion of method, or more properly still be relegated to an appendix, for they proceed rather from the experience and the judgment of the Committee than from a body of experimentation, but they are presented here in the hope that they will prove of value.

The chief difficulties about the tests that modern language teachers usually administer are probably as follows: (1) They can rarely be compared in difficulty with any tests that follow or that have preceded, and hence furnish little basis for judging whether the class or individuals have progressed in relation to the level reached in preceding tests, whether of the fortnight or of the year before; (2) they are not scorable uniformly and objectively so that the same numerical score always corresponds to the same quality of performance; (3) they are usually based on subject matter lying within such narrow limits that they are valid only at a particular moment for a particular group whose progress is gauged most often by the particular "lesson" that has been reached in a given textbook on a given day rather than by any test of power that has even local or departmental significance.¹ While it can not be expected that many teachers will embark on the long and arduous process of constructing tests that fulfill all the requirements of the standardized test,² it is quite possible for many of them to devise measuring instruments of greater significance than those commonly used. A few suggestions as to the construction of "home-made" tests of this character are given in the following paragraphs.

The construction of a grammar test. — A grammar test may be made up by first listing all the constructions and usages that are emphasized during a semester or a year or the whole course and then by devising ways of testing them functionally — sentences to be completed, substitution exercises, and the like — or by recognition as in the Cheydleur Selection Type test. This process may result in a list of 100 to 200 items arranged roughly in order of difficulty, which is mimeographed continuously or in groups of 50 or 60 in such a way that students may write their answers on the mimeographed sheet which is to be handed in. The list is then administered in all the classes of the school on consecutive days in convenient groups of questions. This process may take only a part of each class hour for several days, or two or more consecutive class hours may be devoted to it. Each question should deal with only one point, if possible, and have one answer. An analysis of the number of right or of wrong responses to each question in each semester group is then in order, and a scrutiny of all the answers to make sure that none of the questions is obscurely put or ambiguous, or

¹ Cf. the books by Wood and by Ruch, already referred to, and also W. S. Monroe, *The Present Status of Written Examinations*, University of Illinois Bulletin 17, 1923; C. W. Odell, *Objective Measurement of Education*, University of Illinois Bulletin 44, 1926.

² See Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-28; Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-33; Ruch and Stoddard, *op. cit.*, Chapters 2 and 17.

otherwise misleading. The results of this analysis should enable us to group the questions in sections of convenient length for administration, and of roughly the same grade of difficulty for the same semester. The same questions framed in slightly altered form may reappear in two or more of the groups of items. The outcome of such a procedure would then be several "forms" of the same test, roughly equivalent to each other in difficulty, based on all the grammatical material that is emphasized at the various levels, and available for testing attainment in grammar at various intervals in that particular department. If careful records are kept of the scores of each individual on each "form" of the test, and if the various question groups are improved by slight changes suggested by observation, highly serviceable departmental standards of attainment may be arrived at, which may be checked by comparison with scores made on standardized tests at the end of each semester. "The content of a valid test," say Ruch and Stoddard,¹ "will look like the content of a well-worked-out course of study in the same subject, except that the test will be a limited sampling of the units of the course." If all the items in the various "forms" of the grammar test that we have been discussing were put together, they would constitute a set of exercises involving all the important phenomena in the course; and the larger the number of these phenomena tested in any one "form," the more reliable would be the score as an index of control of the subject matter in general. One of the very great advantages of the objective type of examination as compared with the older type is that by the former the student is tested on many more items in a limited time, though, perhaps, less intensively, than is possible if the older pattern is used.

The construction of a vocabulary test. — By following a somewhat similar procedure with the vocabulary content of the course, for which frequency word counts are a necessary prerequisite, and a check of resultant lists with such general lists as the French, Spanish, and German word books now accessible, Ward's *Minimum French Vocabulary Test Book*, Wood's comparative study of sixteen French textbooks and the like, vocabulary tests could be made up for local purposes, in accordance with the technique followed in the American Council tests, or by some other as, for instance, giving a sentence in the foreign language of which one word is to be translated.

The construction of a silent reading test. — To make a satisfactory reading test, it is first necessary to select a considerable number of passages in the foreign language, the vocabulary, the syntax and the thought-content of which are within the students' range.² As in the case of the grammar test,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

² The task of bringing a given passage within range by slight modifications in vocabulary or sentence structure would not be too difficult provided the maker of the test had a basis for accepting or rejecting given words and constructions. See the discussion by West (*op. cit.*, pp. 266-274) of the desiderata in a reading test.

these passages are submitted to student response, whether by written answers to questions, or by indicating the truth or the falsity of statements drawn from the texts, or by choosing the best answers of several possible answers submitted in the test, or by selecting the one correct answer to each question of several that are proposed. A revision and rearrangement of the passages and questions on the basis of responses at the various grade levels should result, as in the case of grammar, in several approximately equivalent "forms" of a reading test, to be mimeographed and similarly used.

Measuring instruments of this kind, as of all kinds, are, of course, to be used with precaution. Never can the teacher abdicate his responsibility to use his judgment, especially in the case of individual pupils. He should take into account also various factors — the pupil's I. Q. if possible, his interest, his industry, his age, his needs, his class standing, his oral ability in the foreign language, his reading ability in English as shown by his capacity to comprehend the thought of a passage, or of several pages, or of a book of suitable difficulty. But let no one feel as great skepticism in regard to the validity and reliability of even such home-made instruments as of the examinations we habitually set. It is quite impossible to make tests any more untrustworthy than those by which our students are classified the country over today. Wood's study of modern language testing bears out the truth of this statement even in the case of the examinations of one of the best known accrediting agencies in the country, the Regents of New York State, while the Wood and the Henmon material together give abundant proof that a student's presence in a given class at a given semester level has, in entirely too many cases, absolutely no relationship to any other fact in his classification or his history as a language student, except, perhaps, to the fact that he has served a certain period of time in the subject.¹

SUMMARY

Necessity for better control of student progress. — The evidence accumulated from various sources in the foregoing pages abundantly proves how unsatisfactory is the organization of our modern language classes in a very large number, perhaps in the large majority of institutions. Teachers are, of course, well aware of this, and we have noted that efforts are being made in various quarters to bring about a change. Evidently secondary school teachers must secure more assistance from the administration in

¹ All readers of the above remarks are urged to read with care the more extensive presentations of testing in modern languages by Henmon and by Wood, and to profit by the books on the general subject to which reference has already been made: Wood, *Measurement in Higher Education*, pp. 141 ff.; Ruch, *Improvement of the Written Examination*, and especially Ruch and Stoddard, *Tests and Measurements in High School Instruction*, Parts 3 and 4. See also *Modern Language Instruction in Canada*, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," Vol. VII, Part II, for much pertinent material.

deflecting from modern language classes the students whose interests and academic records and intelligence test scores are unfavorable to success in this field. Further inquiry in this direction is necessary before more explicit statements can be made. It is true that students not infrequently make up in interest and in industry for handicaps in other directions, but it is highly probable that general low standing should be a sufficient ground for discouraging students from entering modern language classes. The widespread conviction, shared alike by high school and by college teachers, that too many of our students lack "linguistic capacity" should be treated with more respect than in the past. This "lack of linguistic capacity" may, to be sure, turn out to be something quite different. It may even be due to indifference or to boredom occasioned by the subject matter of the course or by the classroom technique. But school authorities and teachers alike owe it to the cause to consider all the factors and to devise the best remedial measures that they can, and the first step, it must be reiterated, is to measure in comparative terms the results that have been attained.

It is equally necessary that similar precautions be taken in the case of college students. Since these are in the nature of the case more highly selected than the freshmen entering high school, the task should be less onerous and, in all probability, would take the form of adapting the course and the method to the interests and the capacities of different groups of students rather than of denying to any considerable numbers access to modern language courses, for it is difficult to believe that college freshmen are, at worst, incapable of achieving a fair degree of success at the proper level in any academic subject.¹ In this case, then, the problem is somewhat different from that encountered by secondary school teachers, but it is none the less considerable enough to warrant the best efforts of college authorities and teachers.²

The next step at all levels is to ascertain more systematically and by more searching and reliable tests the progress of those who have been admitted to the courses, to eliminate those who are patently failing to

¹ Any such generalization must, of course, be accompanied by some reservations imposed by the wide variety of admission requirements and other standards of the colleges. In 1925 the Bureau of Education listed 773 colleges in the United States. It does not publish the admission requirements for each, but certain deductions may be made from the fact that only 198 of these colleges were accepted by the Association of American Universities as giving adequate preparation for admission to graduate standing.

² B. P. Steeves in an unpublished doctoral dissertation of the University of Washington provides some data on the records of 23,249 college students in first-year modern language work and of 11,764 in second year. The number of first-year students classified as "low or failing" ("Poor," "Failed," "Canceled," "Withdrawn") was 10,509, or 45.2 per cent. In second year, 3705 students, or 31.5 per cent, fell in the same category. The number of F's in the first-year group was 9.5 per cent; in the second-year group, 3.3 per cent. The percentages of "low and failing" grades in both groups were larger in French and Spanish than in German, and largest in Spanish. The data were derived from 5 universities and covered the years 1925-26, 1926-27 for first year, and 1926-27 for second year. Dr. Steeves makes no attempt to analyze the causes for the very large percentage of poor records, but the connection between his data and the present discussion is quite obvious.

progress toward the goals, to aid those whose cases call for special treatment, and to reclassify those who belong in lower or in more rapid groups. Individual differences will, of course, always manifest themselves, even in classes composed of high grade students. A group of twenty-five A students will soon begin to spread out on the marking scale, although their progress will be more rapid and more nearly uniform than in the case of an unselected group. The fact that in some of the schools whose product was examined in the preceding pages a considerable degree of homogeneity prevails at all semester levels indicates that the existing wide variations of classification are not a necessary evil, particularly if improved devices for measuring achievement are used with discretion.

It is of importance also that schools and colleges should measure the results of their work in modern languages with reference to the results obtained elsewhere, particularly in cases where the work is known to be good.¹ The national norms established by the administration of the American Council Alpha tests or any other properly standardized test will not provide such a basis for comparison, because these norms represent merely the mid-point in all the classes tested, whether good, bad, or indifferent. As a matter of fact, it is likely that the American Council norms are fairly high, higher than a more widely distributed administration would yield, since the testing was done rather in the larger urban schools despite an attempt to include all kinds and sizes, and the mid-point attained by the upper quartile would probably represent a sufficiently high standard for all but the brightest students under the best conditions.

A composite picture of attainment in selected schools. — In this connection it may be useful to present the following charts 25, 26, 27, and 28, on which are traced curves made up by averaging the median scores made in six of the best schools in which attainment in French was tested by the Study. These schools are discussed in more detail and the curves for growth for each are presented in the next chapter (Schools 12, 14, 36, 61, 76, 77). At the present moment our concern is to provide a composite picture of actual median attainment in a group of schools where superior, though quite divergent, results are being achieved under varying conditions. With the aid of these charts one may form a conception of the median performance in French classes in the group of selected schools in comparison with the median performance and with the scores made by the upper quartile in all schools tested.

It is interesting to note that in vocabulary and in grammar the composite curves coincide with the national median at first semester, and that the reading curve falls below the median at eighth semester. The fact that

¹ Compare *supra*, Figure 5, p. 186 — the scores of Schools 696, 791, 862, 805, 971 for second-year French, and of Schools 971, 862, 337, etc., for third-year French on the Wood test, and *infra*, Figures 29 to 32, for the performance of superior schools on the American Council Alpha French test.

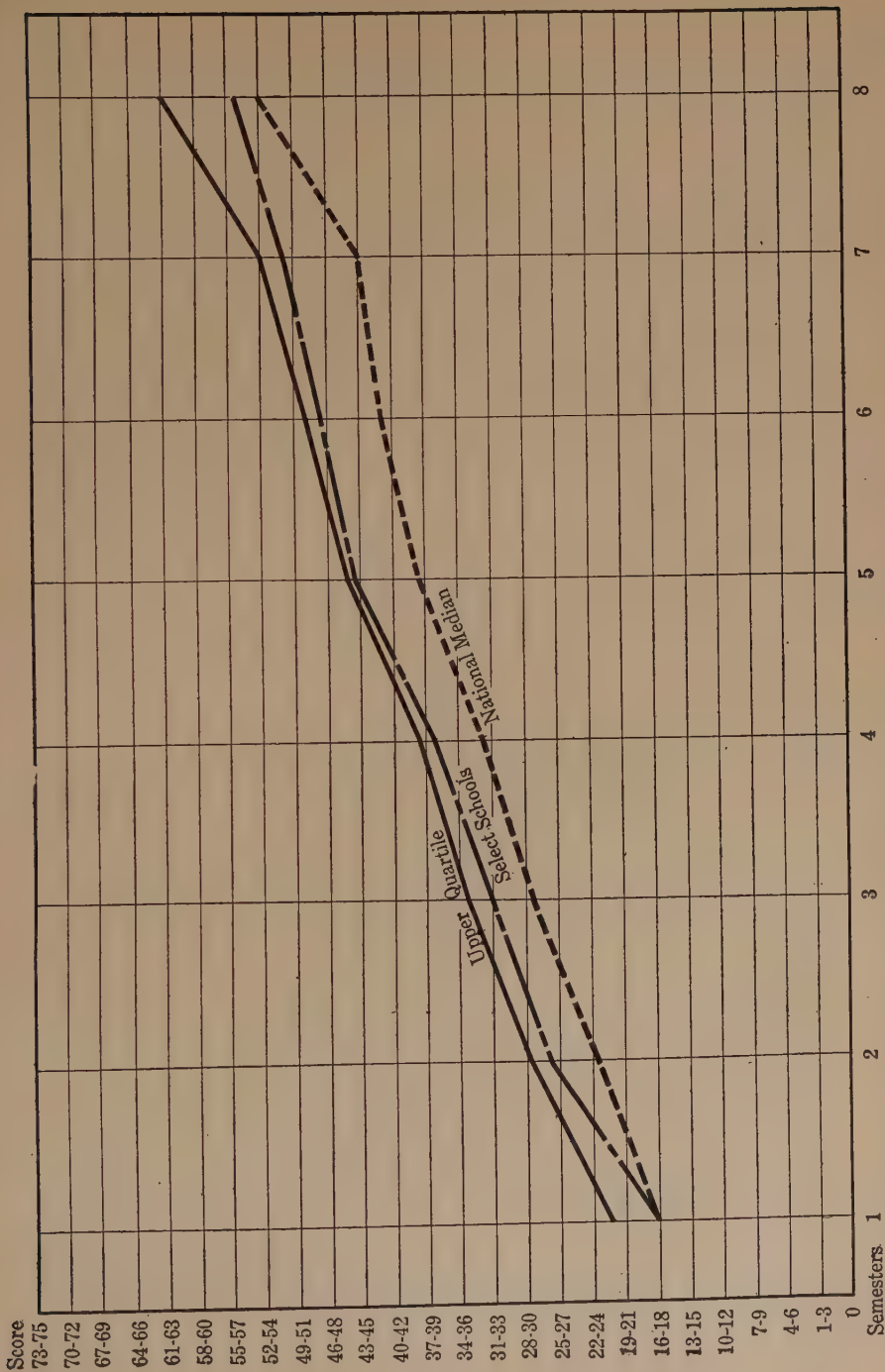


FIGURE 25. — Composite median scores of six selected high schools on American Council Alpha French vocabulary test with national median on the same test.

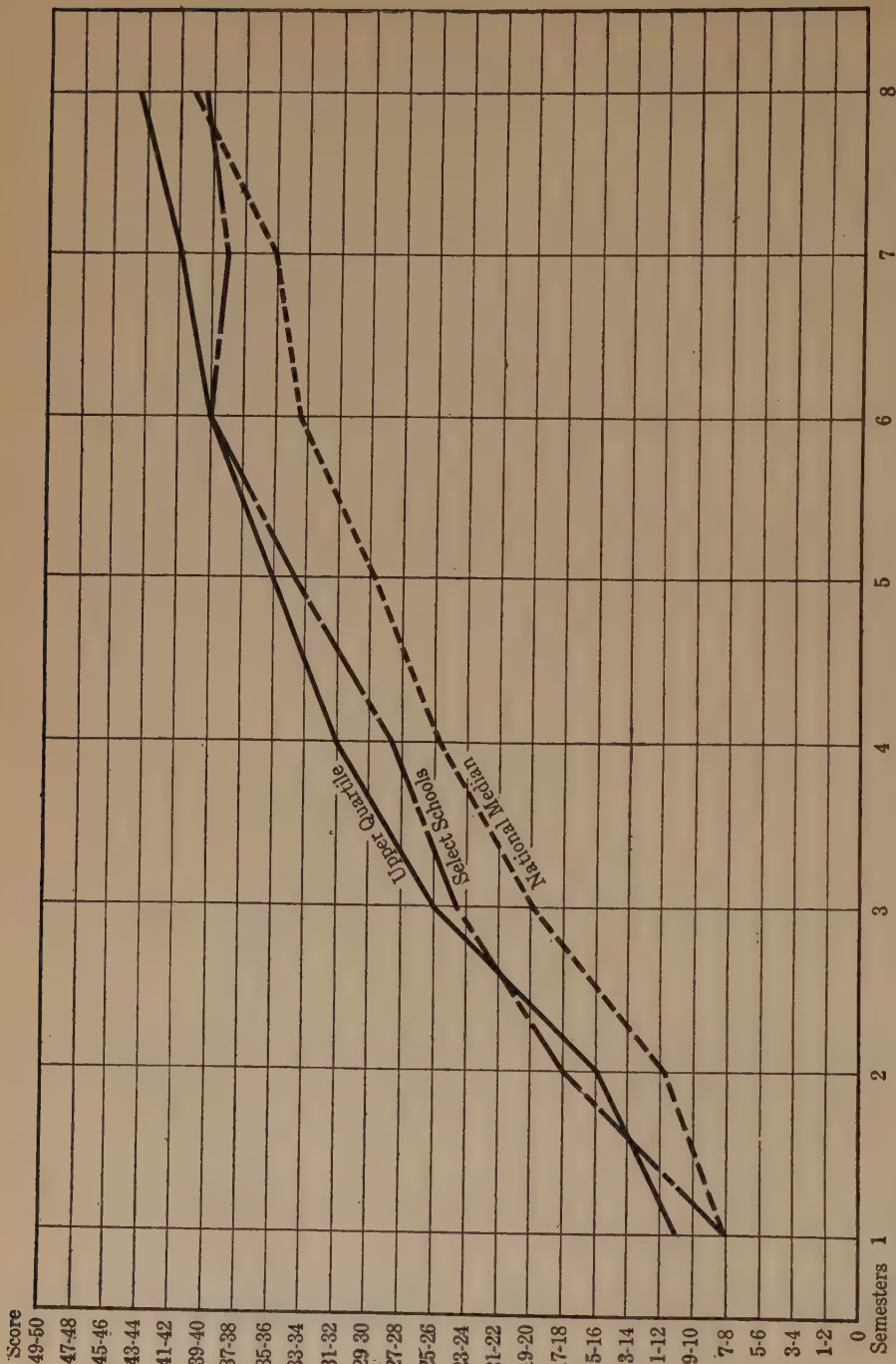


FIGURE 26. — Composite median scores of six selected high schools on American Council Alpha French grammar test, with national median on the same test.

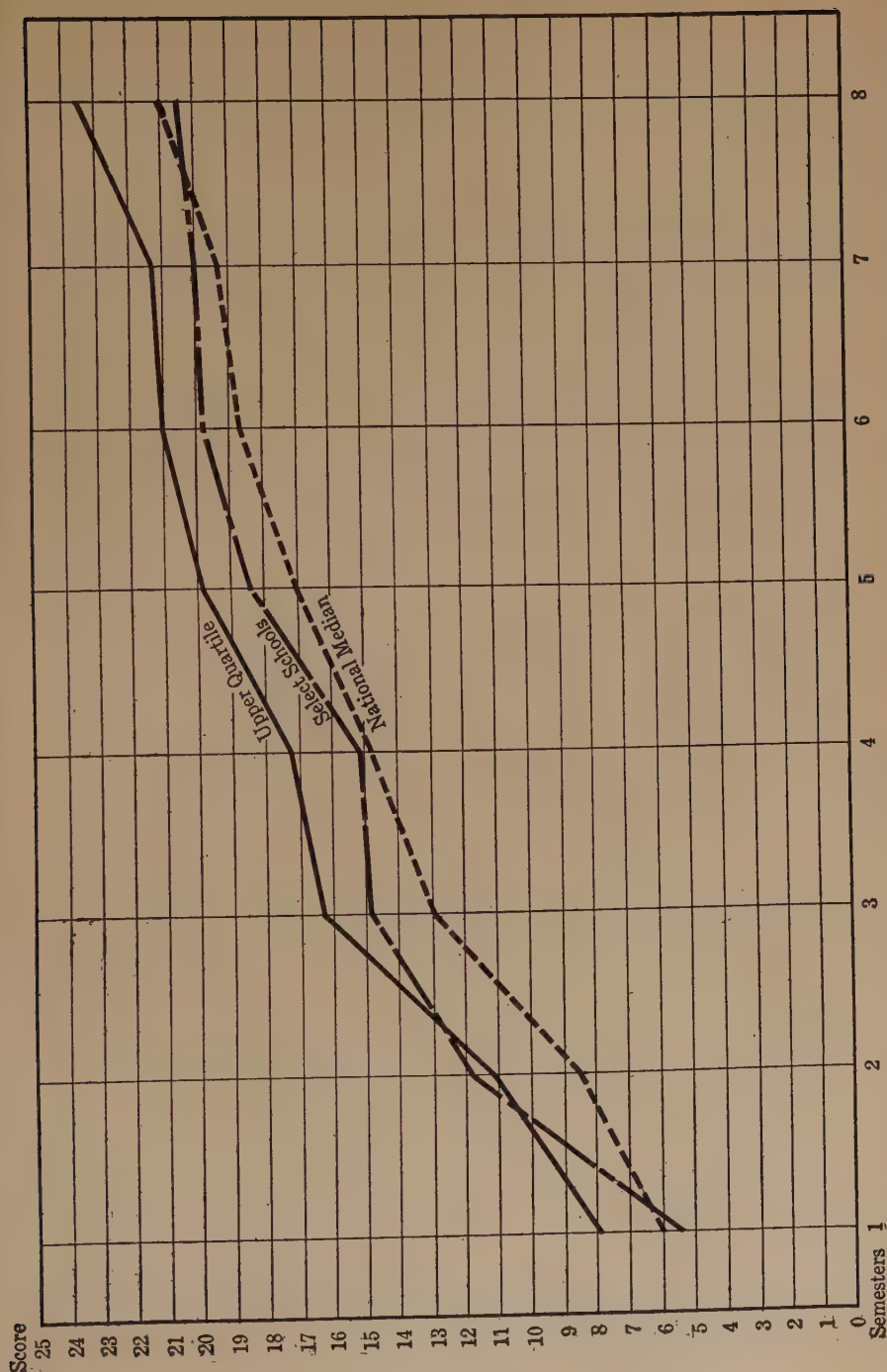


FIGURE 27. — Composite median scores of six selected high schools on American Council Alpha French reading test, with national median on the same test.

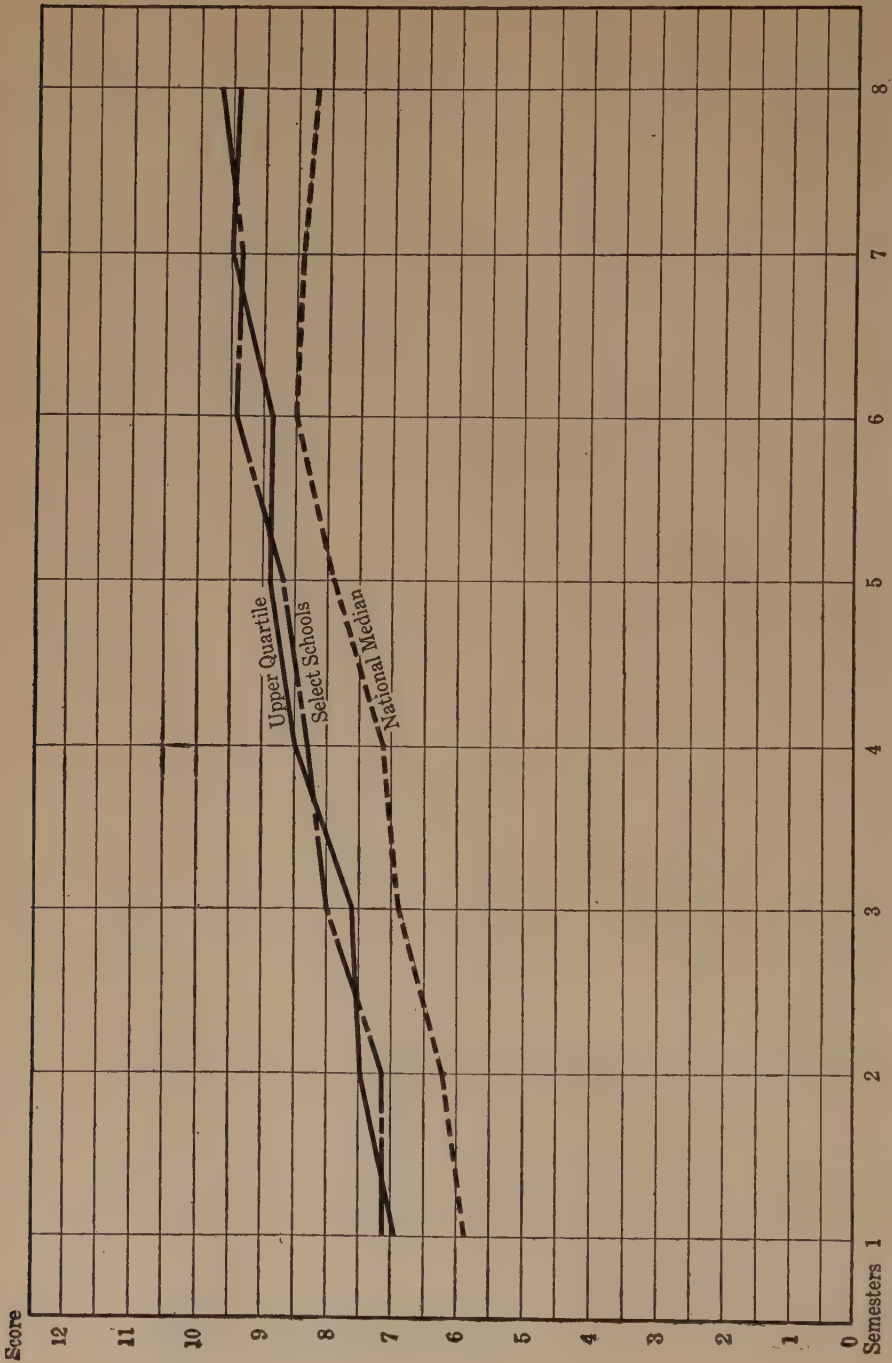


FIGURE 28. — Composite median scores of six selected high schools on American Council Alpha French composition test with national median on the same test.

all eighth semester norms were based on a relatively small number of cases and are, therefore, somewhat less trustworthy than those for the lower semesters, may be a factor in the situation. Another factor is, undoubtedly, that the individual grammar and reading curves for Schools 12 and 14 (Figures 30 and 31, below) break sharply downward for eighth semester and that these schools provided two of the four groups tested at this stage in the six schools. The individual vocabulary curve for School 14 (Figure 29, below) also falls well below the national norm for eighth semester, which brings down this composite curve at the upper end.¹

While the explanation of such anomalies is interesting, the chief value of this exhibit is to give in terms of achievement under actual conditions a graphic representation of what is probably as high grade attainment as would be found in the secondary schools of the country. No one of the six schools presents such a uniform curve of high grade performance at all levels, as may be inferred from the many irregularities in their individual curves. While it would be premature at this stage to propose any absolute standards on the American Council French scales by which we may, at each level, estimate achievement to be adequate or inadequate, the foregoing charts, when considered with those of the individual schools, do present a mark for ambitious teachers of French to aim at, and approach more nearly to an expression in quantitative terms of uniformly high attainment in a modern language than anything to be found elsewhere.

Finally, we may reiterate that at present nothing short of chaos prevails in the classification of our modern language students. The fact that a course is of a given length may have and usually does have little relation to the knowledge of the subject attained by a given class. Many two-year classes are superior in actual attainment to many three-year classes. Modern language teachers can not be held exclusively responsible for this state of affairs, but it can not be remedied until they begin to test systematically for the progress made toward their objectives, and demand demonstrable and comparable progress as the only reasonable basis for advancement to the next stage. They can not do this by testing once each semester with examinations that render it impossible to compare the attainment of different groups of students. How it may be done has been outlined above and is discussed more fully in the books referred to. Care in constructing and in administering locally derived tests and the wise use of standardized examinations, supplemented by attention to the various factors involved in particular cases, will unquestionably lead to a gradual reorganization of our modern language teaching, not only by producing more uniform standards and more homogeneous classification, but also by

¹ Owing to an error in the drawing in Figures 29, 30 and 31, the curves for School 14 are not prolonged to show eighth semester standing and do not illustrate these statements. They are illustrated, however, in Figures 37, 39 and 40 (pp. 261, 263 and 264).

enabling us to determine more accurately what progress our students make toward valid and desirable objectives and what changes in course-content and in method will render their progress more continuous and more certain.

SUMMARIZING CONCLUSIONS

1. The attainment in one year in modern languages in secondary schools is in general so small when measured in terms of knowledge of the language that only under exceptional circumstances may the study of the subject for one year only be considered educationally advisable.

2. Because of the complexity of the task of learning a modern language, particularly when laying substantial foundations for speaking is among the objectives, and because of the apparent need for a somewhat prolonged period of contact with a new language in order to profit fully by the cumulative effect of this type of learning, interested and successful students should not only be enabled to pursue the subject during a minimum period of three years, but should be definitely encouraged to do so by school authorities. To this end, existing two-year courses in secondary schools should be lengthened, and college authorities should exercise some control over the too frequent practice under which entering freshmen elect a new language, instead of continuing one in which they have had a two-year course or less in secondary school. The extent to which this latter situation prevails indicates a definite lack of correlation between the work done in secondary school and what the college expects. A more sympathetic study of the question by both types of institutions should bring about greater harmony in the choice of objectives and in attainment by students.

3. If, for local reasons, only a two-year course is feasible, or if, in any instance, a considerable percentage of students discontinue the modern language at the end of the fourth semester, it is particularly recommended that the course be organized with ability to read the modern language directly as the central aim, with an acceptable standard of reading ability as the minimum attainment requisite for passing.

4. The lack of homogeneity in knowledge of the subject by modern language students grouped in the same classes is lamentable. Equally distressing is the wide diversity in standards of achievement in different schools, and even in the same schools at different semester levels. Students may be placed more discriminatingly by the use of scores on uniform, comprehensive and objectively scored tests administered to all who are enrolled in modern languages, and supplemented by scholastic records, teachers' judgments and other pertinent data. It would also be highly advantageous both to pupils and to effective teaching in modern languages if school authorities would cooperate in grouping students on the basis of

their previous scholastic record and of scores on intelligence tests, and if they would make it possible to reclassify or to drop from the subject those who do not keep up with their classes, whether from incapacity or from other causes.

5. Students who fail have in many schools the opportunity to repeat the subject twice or oftener or to begin another modern language. Such records of repeaters as are accessible suggest that this is not often profitable to the student, and that each individual case should be examined for the purpose of ascertaining whether it would be better for the student to continue in the language work or to take another subject.

6. Teachers would find it profitable to study the technique of constructing objective tests, based on the material of their course, to standardize them roughly for local or departmental purposes, to keep records of student performance from semester to semester based on such tests, on others more fully standardized and on intelligence scores, and thus to establish local standards of attainment and of progress.

7. The percentage of continuation in modern language, both in high school and in junior high school, should be studied in every school and school system over a period of several years. In cases where it is low, it should be determined whether this is due to individual or to administrative conditions or to weaknesses in the instruction. Careful analyses of a number of local situations would furnish a basis for the general inferences which can not now be drawn for lack of sufficient data.

8. Objective, uniform and comprehensive tests, properly constructed and standardized, and supplemented by information concerning the students' secondary school record, would be of great value to colleges for the placement of incoming students, and are recommended to such accrediting agencies as the College Entrance Examination Board for the testing of achievement and for placement.

9. In all departments of two or more teachers in the same modern language, great profit would result from coöperation in the establishment of objectives, of course-content, of method, and of standards of attainment by uniform testing. In large schools a more centralized departmental direction is an advantage, and in school systems much is to be gained by placing all the modern language work under the supervision of competent specialists, who will work in collaboration with the city organization for educational research.

IV

SOME CONSIDERATIONS IN REGARD TO METHOD

Basic considerations. — The preceding chapters have set forth the results of the inquiries that have been made as they bear on the objectives of modern language teaching, on the content of the course, and on the organization of classes. An attempt has been made to interpret these results in terms primarily of the secondary school classroom but, inferentially, of the college classroom too. Much of what has been said under these headings bears directly or indirectly on the question of classroom technique, on method. We may now take it for granted that the choice of a method is inevitably linked with the question of objectives, which, in turn, is linked with everything else: with the length of the course for the majority of the students involved, with the age, the capacity, the background, the interests, the motivation of the students, with the equipment and personal characteristics of the teacher, with the teaching load and with administrative conditions in general.

The present committee has no intention of surveying the numerous discussions of method contained in the writings of such authorities as Viëtor, Sweet, Passy, Gouin, Münch, Breul, Bahlsen, Walter, Ripman, the Committee of Twelve, Kirkman, O'Grady, Jespersen, Schweitzer, Palmer, Krause, Bagster-Collins, the British Committee on Modern Languages, Handschin and Aronstein — to name only some of the best-known presentations of the subject in Europe and in the United States. These works are based primarily on a logical analysis of the processes of language learning and teaching and, except for the physiological attack on pronunciation, the principles involved in these treatments of the subject are for the most part explicit or implicit in many previous discussions, beginning at least with the argument of Cicero's contemporary, M. Terentius Varro, that usage is the decisive factor in language rather than rules, and that a preliminary stage of expressing oneself as best one can necessarily precedes the stage of conformity to accepted usage.¹ The above named writers have naturally contributed little of an experimental nature, either in favor of the doctrines they advocate or against those that they would displace. Their arguments are based chiefly on reason, on experience, on observation and, to a limited extent, on such psychological factors as the

¹ This appears to correspond to what is called in present day technical parlance "the principle of initial diffuse movements." Cf. Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 157. See for the background of present-day methods the unpublished Chicago doctoral dissertation by Erwin Escher, 1928: *The Direct Method of Teaching Languages*.

greater interest aroused by oral work and the operation of the laws of association on the learning of a new vocabulary.¹ Until the psychological laboratory or the classroom experimentalist is prepared to supply more precise data than we now possess, little can be gained by again going over in a similar way the ground that has already been so thoroughly examined by the above mentioned writers and by others less well known.

In the light of generally accepted principles and the evidence presented in the course of the present discussion we may, however, accept as forming the basis of a working hypothesis the following considerations:

1. Whatever be our objectives, they can be more readily attained if we work directly for them than if we engage in activities that bear less immediately on the end in view.

If, for example, we wish to impart a good pronunciation, we must acquaint our pupils with the way in which the foreign sounds are made and must exercise systematically both their vocal organs and their ear until the goal is reached.

If the development of speaking ability is a goal, we must add to the practice in pronunciation enough activity in hearing and in using the language in complete, if simple, sentences to encourage growth in active control of the necessary vocabulary, of the commonest idiomatic constructions and of the essentials of sentence formation.

To ensure the development of reading power within a limited period of time, we must extend as rapidly as we can the student's ability to grasp the thought contained in the printed page. For this purpose he must become sufficiently acquainted with the commonest words, forms, syntactic constructions and idiomatic expressions not to be halted by the moderately frequent occurrence of less usual words and idioms and grammatical constructions.² Such an end can best be attained if the student has sufficiently frequent and extensive contacts with the basic linguistic material to develop the habit of grasping directly the thought expressed in the foreign tongue in the same way (albeit with the expenditure of more effort) as if it were expressed in English. The goal of immediate comprehension, without focusing the attention on any particular linguistic element of each new sentence, should be kept constantly before the student as an essential purpose of reading practice.

If it is considered desirable to arouse interest in the foreign country and to impart the information about it without which interest can be

¹ On this question see especially Eggert, *Der psychologische Zusammenhang in der Didaktik des neu-sprachlichen Unterrichts*, Berlin, 1904; Flagstad, *Psychologie der Sprachpädagogik*, Berlin, 1913; H. Kappert, *Psychologische Grundlagen des neu-sprachlichen Unterrichts*, "Paed. Monog.," Vol. XV, Leipzig, 1915; Epstein, *La Pensée et la polyglossie*, Lausanne, 1918. For a partial summary of the experimental work on the subject, see Handschin, *op. cit.*, Chapter I, and for a most valuable review see *Modern Language Instruction in Canada*, Part I, pp. 25-72.

² Cf. West's view that the number of running words per new word should not be less than forty in a first reader; *op. cit.*, p. 270.

neither intelligent nor discriminating, the teacher must provide the basic material by such means as readings, classroom exhibits, and explanatory talks and comments.

If the aim of the instruction, in part, is to develop a better grasp of the mother tongue, a larger English vocabulary and a better comprehension of the simplest facts of language history, the modern language teacher must utilize prudently the opportunities that the classroom offers to study questions of etymology, semantics and the like, so as to institute comparisons between the foreign and the English vocabulary and syntax, and must comment on the simple facts of language history.

2. The proportions in which the various activities may be best combined, the *dosage*, must be determined in each case by the particular aims in view, aims which depend in turn, of course, on the various other considerations that have so frequently been enumerated in the course of this discussion. But in each case a definite decision must be made and a plan of procedure must be adopted and followed.

3. In only a relatively small number of cases does the study of a modern language continue long enough to result in ready ability to speak and to write the language, even under favorable conditions. It is obvious, therefore, that practice in hearing, in speaking, and in writing the foreign language in most classrooms during the first two years must be regarded as ancillary to the development of reading ability.

4. The ultimate criterion of any teaching procedure is the degree to which it aids in the attainment of the valid and desirable objectives. The only trustworthy means of judging of the effectiveness of a given procedure in a given case is to test the results as thoroughly as possible with relation to local and to national standards and to analyze the causes of success or of failure with a full knowledge of the conditions. Only in this way may we hope to learn whether given results, good or bad, are due to the teaching technique or, as is usually the case, to a combination of circumstances. The very great difficulty of making such an analysis does not lessen the obligation of experimentally minded teachers to turn their best efforts in this direction, nor does it diminish the responsibility of school authorities to encourage and assist them in their endeavors.

Although the Study Committee has unfortunately not been able to secure on the important subject of method enough experimental evidence to warrant a fresh treatment of the topic in a new and authoritative manner,¹ it has assembled information that throws light on specifically Ameri-

¹ See the article by Pargment, "Effect on Achievement of Method Used" in *Modern Language Journal* (May, 1927), and his conclusions as drawn from the evidence: "Method has an effect on achievement, since (a) two instructors of equal ability working under exactly the same conditions, but using different methods, achieved different results; (b) one instructor, equally qualified to use each of two methods, achieved different results according to the method used; (c) two groups of two men each using essentially the same

can conditions and, hence, justifies the present chapter. This information is derived from the inquiry to teachers, of which much use has already been made in the discussion of objectives, from the testing returns, particularly in certain institutions, from special studies, and from visits made to a considerable number of schools by a representative of the Study. Furthermore, it has appeared to the Committee on Investigation that it would be useful to attempt to suggest certain lines of procedure in conducting a course designed especially for the development of reading ability. This is attempted less with the intention of providing a model than in order to exemplify the content of various passages in the preceding chapters, and hence to provide a point of departure for discussion and for experimentation. Too little new evidence is available to warrant any more definite move in this direction.

CURRENT TENDENCIES IN METHOD

Conclusions reached by the Classical Committee. — From a perusal of the outlines of courses of study gathered from various parts of the country it is quite clear that the tide has for some years been setting strongly toward some form of "direct" procedure, that is, toward a procedure whereby students are trained to understand the foreign language through the eye or through the ear or through both, without the interposition of the mother tongue.¹ Not the least significant indication of this tendency is to be found in the report of the Classical Investigation.² Under the section devoted to "general principles" occurs the following sentence: "The methods of teaching should be such as will contribute directly or indirectly to the progressive development of the power to read and understand Latin as Latin. . . ."³ A few pages later we find the following statement:

"We believe that ability to read Latin as Latin, that is to get hold of the sense in the Latin order without translation, can be developed only by means of persistent training on the basis of some definitely conceived method to be followed consistently throughout the secondary course. . . . Oral use of very easy Latin in brief phrases or sentences, especially in the form of question and answer . . . will help to give quicker facility in the reading and understanding of Latin. . . . It is generally admitted that the processes of speaking, reading and writing . . . strengthen each other and furnish the most effective training for understanding any language. . . . Practice in writing Latin should therefore accompany the reading and oral use of Latin from the start. . . . The function of translation as an important exercise *following* the comprehension of the thought in Latin will be dis-

method achieved essentially the same results. The pure Direct method cannot successfully be used in a two-year course, unless we wilfully sacrifice the most important aspect of the language — an intelligent reading knowledge."

Even here, however, there is uncertainty in the terms used, despite the author's statement on pp. 503-504. What is a "pure Direct method"? The results from School 12 as set forth hereafter suggest that the second conclusion overstates the case. Would it not be more accurate to say something like this: The Direct method as used in this particular case involved the sacrifice of an intelligent reading knowledge?

¹ Cf. Handschin, *op. cit.*, pp. 53 ff.

² *Op. cit.*, Chapter V.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

cussed later. . . . While recommending that a reading method following the Latin word-order be regularly employed by the pupil in his attack upon a Latin sentence, we recognize the fact that in the interpretation of difficult passages it will at times be necessary to resort to detailed analysis. We urge, however, that in all such cases the pupil should be made clearly to understand the difference between this process and the reading method to be regularly employed."¹

The report recommends that less attention be paid to the formal aspects of language study than has usually been considered necessary, especially in Latin classes,² and urges discontinuance of the practice "of asking formal questions on inflections while pupils are attempting to comprehend or to translate the thought of a Latin passage. . . . If questions on inflectional forms are asked after translation, it should be only for the purpose of correcting errors. . . ."³

We hasten to add that the Classical Committee, while recognizing the high achievement of some teachers who use the Direct method, does not recommend this type of procedure for general use and gives five reasons for its position, which we may enumerate in summary form as follows:

1. The supply of sufficiently trained teachers is too small.
2. The method is not applicable in large classes.
3. The slow rate of progress in the early stages of the method would create difficulties in the transfer of students.
4. The results obtained by many teachers would be unsubstantial and inexact.
5. Adoption of the Direct method, which subordinates reading to speaking, would render impossible the attainment of various desirable objectives.⁴

One interesting outcome of these and other recommendations of the Classical Committee is the modification, beginning with 1929, of the examinations in Latin and in Greek set by the College Entrance Board. The changes are not radical, but they take account of the fact that reading ability may be tested otherwise than by translation and that questions on the literary and historical aspects of the subject matter have a place in examinations.⁵

We may conclude, then, that the "grammar-translation" method in its purity has officially been rejected, even by the Latinists, although we may be sure that it will, in fact, survive for a long time both in the classics and in modern languages. As long as the leading examining bodies continue to put questions on forms and syntax in the traditional way and to test reading ability through translation, teachers will continue to prepare their pupils according to the familiar patterns, even in those regions where college entrance requirements are usually administered on the certificate plan, except, perhaps, in certain schools which prepare their students in

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 189-197, *passim*.

² *Ibid.*, p. 217 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 234-235. This sentence is worthy of remark. In the minds of the Classical Committee the Direct method "subordinates reading to speaking."

⁵ Document 120 of the College Entrance Examination Board, Dec., 1926, pp. 30-33.

conformity with their own educational views and make but few concessions to external standardizing agencies. This is not surprising. Even those teachers who would like to change their procedure find it very difficult to envisage anything radically different, and it is to be noted that the Classical Committee, while recommending that translation be abandoned at the earliest possible moment, offers few specific suggestions regarding just what is to be done in the classroom.

There is apparently little doubt that both pupils and teachers find the general procedure involved in the application of the Direct method of greater interest in the classroom than the older type of recitation in which a certain number of students were called on each day to pronounce the words in a limited number of sentences before translating them into halting and unidiomatic English, supplemented by a few questions on forms and syntax. As such questions are put *after* the translation has been apparently accepted as adequate, they can have no other function than to test the students in regard to their knowledge of formal grammar, their ability to classify grammatically constructions which they apparently have understood. In far too many schoolrooms today *read* is synonymous with *translate*, as it was thirty years ago. Reading ability is tested through ability to translate and to answer grammatical questions, just as though we demanded the ability to paraphrase and to parse as evidence of reading ability in the mother tongue.

A canvass of current classroom procedure. — Let us record first of all the evidence of views on method that has been gathered from the selected secondary school and college teachers who were consulted on this and on other subjects.

The following types of exercise were most frequently recorded in the two-year course: study of inflected forms, 220 teachers; study of rules of syntax, 169 teachers; oral translation into English, 132 teachers; dictation, 140 teachers; translation into the foreign language, 98 teachers; question and answer in the foreign language, 102 teachers. For the three-year course the record is but slightly different except that apparently greater relative use is made of question and answer in the foreign language, of translation from and into English, of dictation. In other words, the addition of a third year appears to increase the use made of the kinds of exercises that we usually associate with the Direct method: dictation, 199 teachers; question and answer in the foreign tongue, 197 teachers; free composition, 161+ teachers. But as the relative increase in the three-year course in translating into English (194 teachers) and from English (194 teachers) is almost as great, the net result, after all, does not indicate the distinct predominance of any particular principle of method. It may be, of course, that the influence of college entrance requirements is at work here.

Of 541 teachers, 67 per cent reported language clubs, and about the same relative number reported correspondence between foreign students and their own.

Several other items in the questionnaire were designed to canvass the opinions and practices of teachers. As regards the procedures followed in developing vocabulary in first year, these three types lead: intensive reading, 194 teachers; extensive oral work, 217 teachers; practice on minimum word-lists, 159 teachers. Since only 52 teachers recorded their faith in extensive reading for developing vocabulary at this stage, the contrast is evident. The corresponding numbers in the same order for second year are: 235, 232 and 117 teachers, while 157 teachers indicated their use of extensive reading for this purpose. Of 228 college teachers, 81 per cent favored intensive reading for the first year and 68 per cent favored extensive reading in second year. Evidently the relative value of extensive reading for acquiring a vocabulary is considered greater in the second year, but the tendency toward detailed study of a small amount of material plus oral work is very strong for both years. The number of secondary school teachers favoring extensive reading for the third year is 203, as compared with 179 who favor intensive reading and 184 who consider that control of vocabulary may be best developed through oral practice. While there is nothing absolute about these figures, they tend to confirm the belief already expressed that there is a noticeable drift throughout the profession toward the adoption of various elements of the Direct method procedure, which emphasizes the frequent reworking orally of a limited amount of material as the best basis for subsequent progress.¹

This conclusion is further strengthened by the replies to a question bearing on the distribution of time in the classroom. Teachers were asked what proportion of the period should be given, (a) to oral work, (b) to translation into English, (c) to translation from English, (d) to free composition, (e) to drill in English. For the first year the largest groups assigned 50 per cent of the time to (a), 10 per cent to (b), 20 per cent to (c), 10 per cent to (d), 10 per cent to (e). For the second year the largest groups of teachers distribute the time in almost the same way except that a relatively larger number are in favor of the 10 per cent time allotment to free composition. The third- and fourth-year allotments are almost exactly parallel with those of the first and second except, singularly enough, for an apparent tendency to reduce the time allotted to free composition in fourth year. The significant thing is the constancy of the 50 per cent allotment to oral work in all four years.²

¹ See the argument as stated by Handschin, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

² G. A. Rice studied the classroom practices of 210 teachers of French and Spanish in some 15 California cities and towns and attempted to tabulate the results in terms of percentages of the time involved. The results for French are as follows:

Median percentages of class time devoted to the general class activities were as follows: translation, 22;

The number of college teachers who replied to the various parts of this question for first year varied from 129 voting on free composition to 213 who voted on oral work. The mean time allowance would in their case result about as follows: oral work, 40 per cent; translation into English, 15 per cent; translation into the foreign language, 20 per cent; free composition, 10 per cent; drill in English, 20 per cent. The proportions for second-year college work would, according to this testimony, be much as in the case of first year, with a slight tendency to increase the amount of translation into English and to diminish the time allotted to drill in English.

Teachers' preferences in regard to method. — Another question was designed to elicit judgments concerning the relative merit of the "Direct," the "Eclectic" and the "Grammar" methods in developing ability to read, to write, to speak and to understand, that is, in promoting the attainment of the conventional group of immediate objectives. The following definitions were given as points of departure: "Direct Method," "instruction wholly or almost wholly in the foreign tongue"; "Grammar-Translation," "uses the foreign language only incidentally without trying to have the student acquire the ability to speak it"; "Eclectic Method . . . grammar drill in English and translation into English when necessary, but which tries at the same time to train the pupil to speak the language."¹

As judged by secondary school teachers, the "Eclectic" was the favorite at all four stages for ability to read and to write; for ability to speak in the two-year course the vote was 238 to 214 in favor of the "Direct" method and, at the same stage, 249 to 188 for ability to understand the language when spoken. In the three-year group, 203 to 195 judged the "Eclectic" procedure better for developing speaking ability, and the "Direct" method won for ability to understand by a similar trifling majority: 200 to 191. The fourth-year vote was in harmony with the others: a distinct preference for the "Eclectic" method to develop ability to read and to write, with a slight tendency to prefer the "Direct" for developing the other two

grammar in English, 13; grammar in French, 17; pronunciation, 15; written work, 12; rapid reading, 15.

An Analysis of the Classroom Practices of 210 Teachers of Modern Foreign Language. A study by George A. Rice, Lecturer in Education, University of California. MS. in the files of the Study.

Exercises in free composition and in "conversation" are included in several of those types of practice — more than enough to make up the hypothetical 100 per cent. Since the median estimate of the time devoted to oral work was 90 per cent and since this was understood to include, among other things, practice in grammar, conversation, free composition, pronunciation, and reading, it is evident that such an analysis, while not entirely accurate in its divisions, does serve to reinforce the statement already made several times that most of the activities in most classrooms are concerned with exercises that lead rather to speaking, writing and understanding the spoken word, and leave but little time for practice in reading as such. The assumption underlying the present situation has been referred to more than once, namely that training by reproductive exercises is the best training for reading, that developing the student's expressive powers is the most effective way of developing his ability to comprehend immediately what he reads and hears. Since it is invariably true that even under the present system a given pupil's reading range is always much wider than his speaking and writing range, does not this fact constitute an argument that a shift of emphasis in classroom practices would give a higher degree of validity to our assumption of the one "sur-render value" of modern language study which we may propose with any reasonable degree of confidence?

¹ *Manual of Directions to the Questionnaire to Selected Teachers.*

abilities. The number of voters ascribing superior merit to the "Grammar" method was strikingly small, the largest groups who considered this the best way of developing ability to write, in the two-year and in the three-year courses, respectively, being 106 and 61.

In the case of the two-year college course, the judgments recorded agree substantially with those of the secondary school group as noted above. Of 233 votes in regard to developing reading ability in a one-year course, 65 per cent preferred the "Eclectic" method and 70 per cent of 210 thought it the best for developing ability to write, while 53 per cent and 58 per cent of those voting thought the "Direct" method best for developing ability to speak and to understand the language when spoken. In the case of a two-year course the vote was substantially in accord with the opinions expressed with respect to the first year.

Still another question inquired regarding the relative effectiveness for the development of reading ability of translation into English and of extensive oral practice in the foreign language. The number of replies for first year from the secondary school group was 528; for second year, 531; for third year, 432; for fourth year, 261. The percentages in each year-group favoring oral work were, respectively, 44, 45, 62, 67. Of the first-year group, 34 per cent considered oral practice less effective than translation, and 21 per cent of the second-year group took the same position. When asked about the causes of neglect of oral work (speaking and hearing), a clear majority of the 541 teachers voting selected these three: overlarge classes, too much ground to cover, lack of speaking ability by the teacher. Precisely the same obstacles to satisfactory oral work are put in the forefront by the college teachers who replied to this question. Lack of speaking ability by teachers looms largest in the eyes of 76 per cent of the 222 who recorded their judgments, with overlarge classes and "too much ground to cover" coming second. This last item in the bill of complaints of the college teacher is surprising since he does not labor under the burden of the various requirements by which his secondary school colleague finds his freedom hampered.

It is interesting to note that 313 secondary school teachers out of 531 (about 60 per cent) ascribed the neglect of oral work to a "lack of belief in the possibility of attaining oral-aural ability," whereas 258 teachers ascribed it to a "lack of belief in the value of attaining oral-aural ability" in contrast with 283 who consider this skepticism a factor of little or no moment.

While there is nothing definitive about the preceding figures, they are worthy of attention. They would seem to indicate that the likelihood of success in developing oral ability in the American classroom is, in the view of teachers, rather small because: (1) of material difficulties (classes are too large; the demands of the course leave too little time); (2) the teacher's

equipment is deficient; (3) there is a widespread doubt among members of the profession whether, on the one hand, it is possible for their students to attain "oral-aural" ability, and, on the other, whether this ability is of enough value to justify the necessary effort.¹ It may be added as of some significance that when teachers are asked which of these causes of neglect of oral work it is most important to eliminate, they give replies that harmonize with what precedes: 214 voters would reduce deficiencies in speaking ability by teachers; 144 and 132 teachers, respectively, would cut the size of classes and lessen the amount of ground to cover. About half the college teachers single out the teacher's inability to speak the foreign language as the obstacle that it is most important to remove, with over-large classes a poor second.

In the last analysis, then, the first and second difficulties as enumerated above would appear to be, in the opinion of the profession, the chief barriers to greater emphasis on oral work; and while the drift toward a Direct method procedure is very strong, to many teachers the obstacles in the road to a realization of Direct method objectives as usually understood loom very large. We may guess that the liveliness, the greater interest of the Direct method procedure, and the larger participation by all the members of the class in a well conducted recitation, together with the alert ingenuity and resourcefulness displayed by the masters of the art, exercise an irresistible fascination for most members of the profession. They would prefer to succeed by this procedure, which entails a far greater burden on the teacher, than by the wholly pedestrian though less exacting procedure taken over from the older languages. It is like embarking on a gallant and enticing adventure, instead of trudging along a dusty road with only the parts of speech and their uses for landmarks. But many teachers are not easy in their minds, as we have seen. They question the possibility of considerable and successful attention to oral work in American schoolrooms until certain highly refractory material obstacles are removed, obstacles that are, moreover, likely to remain. They might have added to these the obstacle of the brevity of the course for most students, a factor which does not appear to have been taken directly into account by those who replied to the questionnaire.

As evidence in this general connection we may cite in summary form some data on the preparation and experience of teachers that are given more fully elsewhere.²

For the entire country there were reports from the public secondary

¹ As the question was framed, the element of time was not taken into account, but most teachers would naturally think of the conditions under which they themselves were working. It is of interest to note that slightly over 50 per cent of the 524 expressing an opinion on this point indicate their belief that oral work would be promoted if the profession had access to objective tests by which to measure attainment in this direction.

² C. M. Purin, *The Training of Teachers of the Modern Foreign Languages*, "Publications of the American and Canadian Committees," Vol. XIII.

schools in answer to the Study's inquiry in 1925 by 10,096 teachers of French, German and Spanish, either as single languages or in combination with each other or with Latin. Of these 1711 were men and 8387 women. Of the total, 7691 held the bachelor's degree, while 1210 held no academic degree. A detailed analysis of their training and experience follows in Tables 32, 33, and 34.

The modern language teachers of the country have, on the average, studied the subject for 12 years, and have had besides nearly seven years' teaching experience.¹ About 76 per cent of them have, as we have seen,

TABLE 32

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1925 WHO WERE ENGAGED IN TEACHING FRENCH, GERMAN OR SPANISH, SINGLY OR IN COMBINATION WITH ANOTHER FOREIGN LANGUAGE, WITH NUMBER WHO HAVE HAD COLLEGE AND POST-GRADUATE TRAINING AND AVERAGE YEARS OF STUDY AND EXPERIENCE.

LANGUAGES	NUMBER OF SECONDARY MOD. LANG. TEACHERS BY SINGLE LANGUAGES AND PRINCIPAL COMBINATIONS	NUMBER WITH COLLEGE TRAINING	POST-GRADUATE TRAINING	AVERAGE YEARS OF STUDY		AVERAGE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
				First Language	Second Language	
French . . .	4326	3099	747	5	..	6
German . . .	334	181	113	6	..	11
Spanish . . .	2478	1577	715	4	..	6
Fr. and Sp. . .	612	364	224	6	4	8
Fr. and Ger. . .	134	65	56	6	7	15
Fr. and Lat. . .	1423	1077	215	4	6	5
Sp. and Lat. . .	457	316	90	3	5	5

TABLE 33

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1925 ENGAGED IN TEACHING FRENCH, GERMAN OR SPANISH, SINGLY OR IN COMBINATION WITH ANOTHER FOREIGN LANGUAGE, WHO HAVE HAD LESS THAN THREE AND MORE THAN TEN YEARS OF EXPERIENCE.

LANGUAGE(s)	NUMBER WITH LESS THAN 3 YEARS' EXPERIENCE	NUMBER WITH MORE THAN 10 YEARS' EXPERIENCE
French	1654	789
German	90	151
Spanish	815	432
French and Spanish	158	141
French and Latin	616	160
Spanish and Latin	173	64
Total	3506, 35% of Total	1737, 17% of Total

¹ Cf. Purin, *op. cit.*

TABLE 34

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1925 WHO HAVE NEVER TRAVELED OR STUDIED ABROAD, WITH PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL NUMBER REPORTING, DISTRIBUTED AS THEY OCCUR IN THE EIGHT REGIONS.

REGION	TOTAL 1	NO TRAVEL OR STUDY 2	PERCENTAGE 2 1
I	1,466	938	70
II	2,691	1,681	61.5
III	1,251	1,023	81
IV	1,947	1,364	72
V	619	494	80
VI	670	472	69
VII	723	588	80.7
VIII	728	390	54
National Summary . . .	10,096	6,950	Average 71

the bachelor's degree and about 29 per cent of them have had some travel or study experience abroad, or both. In view of the skepticism expressed by a considerable number of teachers with regard to the attainment in speaking ability by members of the profession, who have an average study and teaching experience of more than 12 years, one is not surprised to observe, as we have already done, that this same body of teachers has even greater misgivings with respect to the attainment in speaking ability by the great majority of their students, relatively few of whom remain in modern language classes for more than two years. When we add to this the further significant fact that, despite the marked movement in that direction, about 71 per cent of the modern language teachers of the country — for we may safely assume that further returns would not alter the proportions — had had in 1925 no travel or study in foreign countries, these misgivings appear to be wholly justified.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

In order to get additional evidence on the teaching situation in the modern language classrooms of the country, the Committee on Investigation deputed Miss Josephine T. Allin, an experienced member of the profession, to visit as many schools and colleges as was practicable in the semester during which she was able to devote herself to the task, the winter semester 1926-27. During this time Miss Allin visited about 250 classes in 80 institutions, chiefly in the region east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio. She was asked to make it a point when feasible to observe classes in schools where the American Council tests had been administered in the hope that this would give a double check on the situation in certain

centers. In the nature of the case she was forced to limit her observations to schools in urban centers and, acting on principle, she made it a point to observe the work of the best teachers in a school rather than that of the rank and file. Consequently, the data that she gathered and the conclusions to which she came must be considered as based rather on the best modern language teaching in the country than on a cross section of the American modern language classrooms.

In a few cases good teachers were found struggling with poor classes, all ranked as low grade by the school. Of the 250 classes, 134 were graded by the observer "excellent" or "good," and about 116, or 46 per cent, would consequently have fallen under the heading "fair" or "poor" if they had been noticed at all. The percentage is large enough to be noted.

It is obviously inadvisable to publish integrally such a report as an observer would naturally draw up after an experience of this kind, and it would be impossible to weave the material into a connected whole with the purpose of drawing therefrom definite conclusions. At the same time certain items have a general bearing, as will be seen.

Quality and value of oral work. — The observer classed 76 of the classes visited (about 30 per cent) as being "excellent" and 58 as being "good." In two of the "excellent" group, English was the language of the classroom. In six of these classes both English and the foreign language were employed. In 68 classes, or about 90 per cent of the "excellent" group, the foreign language was the vehicle for communication and for practice on the subject matter of the lessons.

Of the 58 "good" classes, English was used in 10, a combination of English and the foreign language in 12 and the foreign language in 36, or about 62 per cent. One would conclude then that in about 78 per cent of the 134 best classes observed, the foreign language was the medium through which the teaching was done. The observer's judgment on this point, as indicated by the following citation, is unambiguous: "There is no doubt . . . that the best classes I saw were those taught in the foreign language, for they commonly combined knowledge of grammar with good pronunciation, oral and aural facility and ability to read, a combination which classes in reading or grammar method rarely attain."

Of the 69 teachers graded as "excellent," 49 (71 per cent) were of American birth and training, whereas 42 (84 per cent) of the 50 teachers rated "good" had a similar history. In 11 cases the classes in the "excellent" group were noted as being below their general level in pronunciation. In the "good" group, 13 classes were similarly graded. The foreign born teachers classed as "excellent" or "good" numbered 32, of whom 7 had been less than 5 years in this country. Four of the classes in this group were graded as "fair" in pronunciation. In the 24 classes with a poor pronunciation, an attempted analysis of the causes gives: "American

accent," 10; "subject slighted," 9; "carelessness," 6; "inexperience of teacher," 6.

The median size of the classes listed as "excellent" was from 16 to 20; of the "good" classes, 21 to 25 and nearer the smaller figure. Thirteen of the "excellent" classes and 6 of the "good" had over 30 students. It would appear that the handicap of large classes is less of a barrier to teaching effectiveness than one might think, although the drain on the teacher's nervous energies may be all the more serious for being hidden.

Comment on individual cases. — In the case of the classes listed as 'poor,' the following quotations may be of interest as suggesting the causes:

School 6. "The whole department was badly in need of reorganization. . . . For years they have lived in friction. All classes were taught in English and all seemed disinterested."

School 8. "Mr. X. had absolutely no interest in his work, was unsympathetic and had no faith in the pupils, could not keep order and did all the talking."

School 10. "Mr. Y. was young, unsure of himself and entirely untrained."

School 18. "Miss X. . . . had very poor discipline, frequently scolded and seemed unable to interest the pupils."

School 23 (a private school). "The teachers impressed me as being uneducated and untrained and inexperienced — in most cases."

School 27. "Mr. X. was an inexperienced teacher. . . . He said he was 'forced to do this grammar for the College Board examinations.'"

School 39. "At no time did I find a school . . . for which I was so sorry. It is a school with a fine record, now crowded and uncomfortable. There seems to be poor coöperation between the office and the faculty. Further there seems to be very little uniformity in the methods employed in the different high schools of X. Several of the teachers were aroused to their present condition but were helpless to remedy them. . . . Lastly, even the interested teachers had no pedagogical training and seemed to be groping. . . ."

School 40. "Mr. X. in Spanish has lived in South America but refuses to talk Spanish in his classes or to make the class speak the language. Indifferent and lazy."

School 50. "In School A, Miss G, whose mother tongue is Spanish, had no understanding of Americans and talked English to them entirely."

In a number of the schools visited some attention is paid to sectioning pupils according to ability. Schools 7, 11, 21, 25, 26, 31, 32, 46, 62 have slow-rapid sections. The division is based in some cases on I. Q., in others on the elementary school record, in others on the grade in the preceding class. Schools 3, 4, and 40 have had to give up such a division because of

administrative difficulties. In the case of School 40, the administration would not observe the differentiation between the two types of sections. The pupils of School 7 have an average I. Q. of 125; School 27 accepts only pupils with a high I. Q.; School 31 accepts none with an I. Q. below 100. Schools 41 and 47 group modern language classes according to whether the pupils begin with Latin or with a modern language, giving precedence to the former. School 62 does not permit the C group of pupils to take a foreign language. School 73 classifies in English, mathematics and science according to the I. Q., but the modern language classes are too small to warrant such a grouping.

Difficulty of interpreting the testimony. — What precise conclusions can be drawn from the foregoing testimony? Obviously very few except the useful conclusion that such a rapid tour of inspection can not be expected to yield very fruitful data, even when supplemented by test scores as was the case in a number of instances. The test scores undoubtedly indicate what classes have achieved in the language, but they do not reveal the why and the how except in the most general way. We have now learned, as we probably should have known before, that classroom observation, to be of genuine assistance in analyzing a situation, must be done on a more deliberate program than was followed in the present case. The observer must usually live with each school long enough to study it from various angles and to take into account those more elusive elements — such as the teacher's training, skill and power of arousing interest, the cultural background of the pupils, the relationship between colleagues in the department, the kind of departmental supervision, the general tone of the school — which are not less potent in conditioning achievement than the more obvious factors with which the present discussion is chiefly concerned. This will come out even more clearly in the following pages.

A STUDY OF ACHIEVEMENT IN CERTAIN SCHOOLS

The showing in six selected schools. — Charts 29, 30, 31 and 32, reproduced from Henmon's work,¹ present graphically the performance in certain schools that have been tested at a number of levels by the American Council Alpha French test. An examination of the norms of achievement of each school at the various semester levels, with respect to each other and to the national norm — the term "norm" designates merely the median score attained by all students tested at a given level, — which is represented by the heavy black line, reveals certain facts that are of interest. Schools 8, 14 and 61 are large public high schools in important urban centers where one would expect to find teaching of good grade, representative pupils and a generally progressive attitude. The other three are private schools, one in the East, the others in the Central West, and all operate

¹ See Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 340-343, and Charts 91-94.

under favorable conditions. The French classes in School 12 (which is designated as School A in the Buswell monograph; see above, pp. 148–151) and School 14 are conducted according to the general theory and practice of the Direct method, both under competent supervision. Conditions in School 8 are distinctly unfavorable: comparatively few pupils from a cultured background, crowded conditions in the building, instructors of very heterogeneous teaching capacity, no provision for any sort of supervision, and no interest in the subject by the administration of the school. The work in School 61 is well organized under a vigorous departmental head and appears to be dominated by a strong *esprit de corps*. School 76 draws from a select group economically, with college entrance as a general goal, and commands, presumably, a superior teaching staff. More details about the different school conditions will be given later.

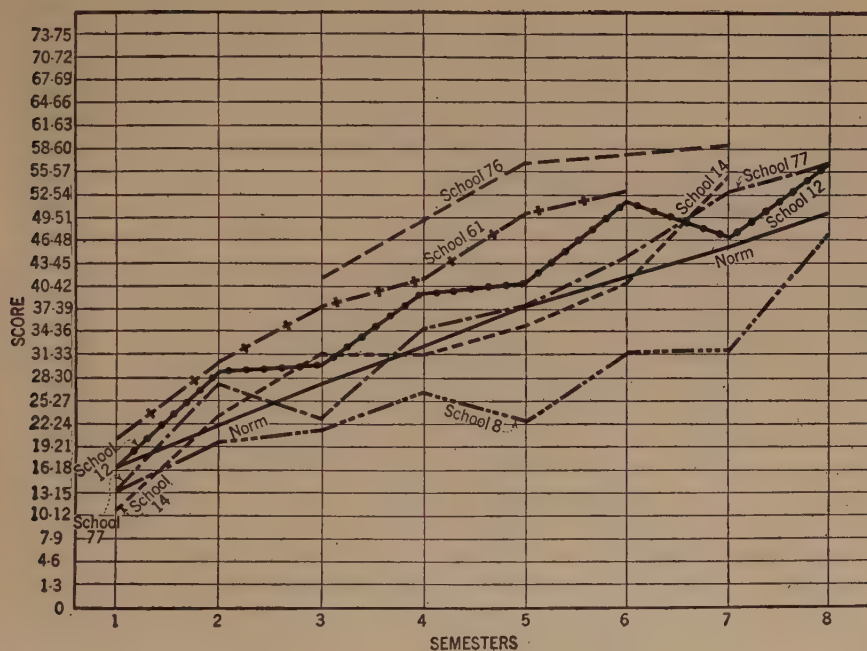


FIGURE 29. — Showing comparative achievement in French vocabulary in certain selected schools. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

Analysis of the growth curves. — 1. From Figures 29 to 32, which present the national norms and the school norms for the four units of the American Council Alpha French test, it is apparent that the classes in Schools 12, 14, 61, 76, 77 perform generally at a higher level than that represented by the national norm. The classes in School 8 are uniformly below this curve, although first semester grammar is up to the norm, while scores for fifth

and seventh semester composition more nearly approach the heavy line than at any other points.

2. The curves for the superior schools indicate considerable divergencies with respect to their own relative semester attainment and to each other. In the vocabulary test the graphs for Schools 76 and 61 fall well above the others, and that for 61 indicates almost uniform progress from stage to stage. The path of progress in School 12, while less uniform, and showing definite retrogression for seventh semester, is nevertheless indicative of

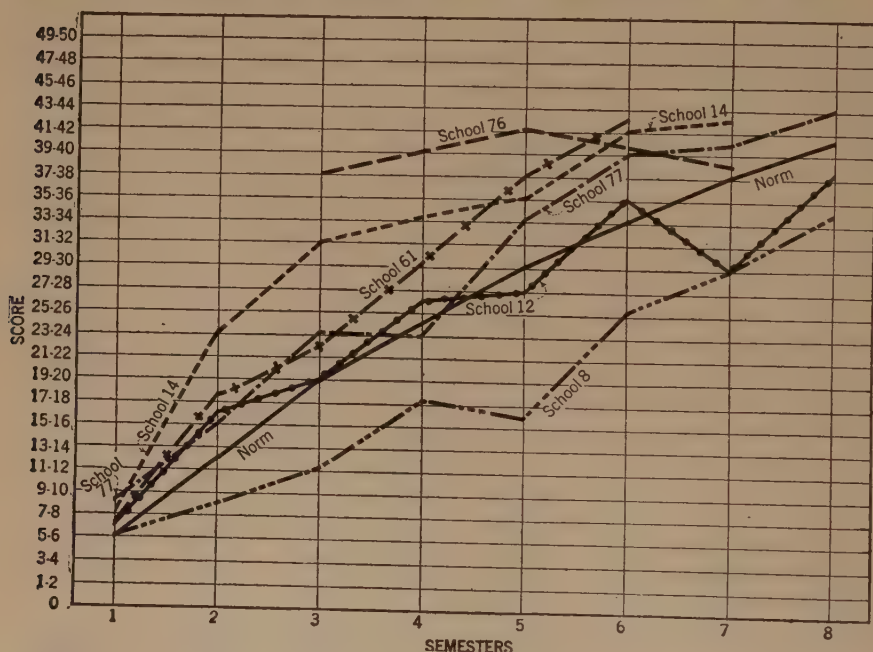


FIGURE 30. — Showing comparative achievement in French grammar in certain selected schools. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 341.

superior achievement. School 14 is below par at the first, fourth, fifth and sixth semester levels, showing superiority in knowledge of vocabulary only at the second, third, and seventh semester stages. School 77 is below par for attainment in first and third semesters and dips to the norm in fifth. In knowledge of vocabulary, as rated by this test, Schools 76, 61 and 12 fall in one group, while 14 and 77 fall in a lower group, with School 8 well in the rear.

3. The records of Schools 14, 76, and 61 in French grammar place them high in the scale, although the seventh semester in 76 is actually inferior to semester 5 and but little above the norm. School 14 shows a distinct relative slowing up after the third semester — grammar is studied especially

intensively in this school during the first three semesters — and yields the *pas* before the end of the third year to 61, which continues on its upward path with hardly a waver. School 12 sticks rather close to the norm, now above, now below, dropping to the level of School 8 in seventh semester and rising only slightly for eighth. School 77 is well above the norm at every point but the fourth semester. As evaluated by the grammar test, the positions of Schools 12 and 77 are reversed from their relative standing

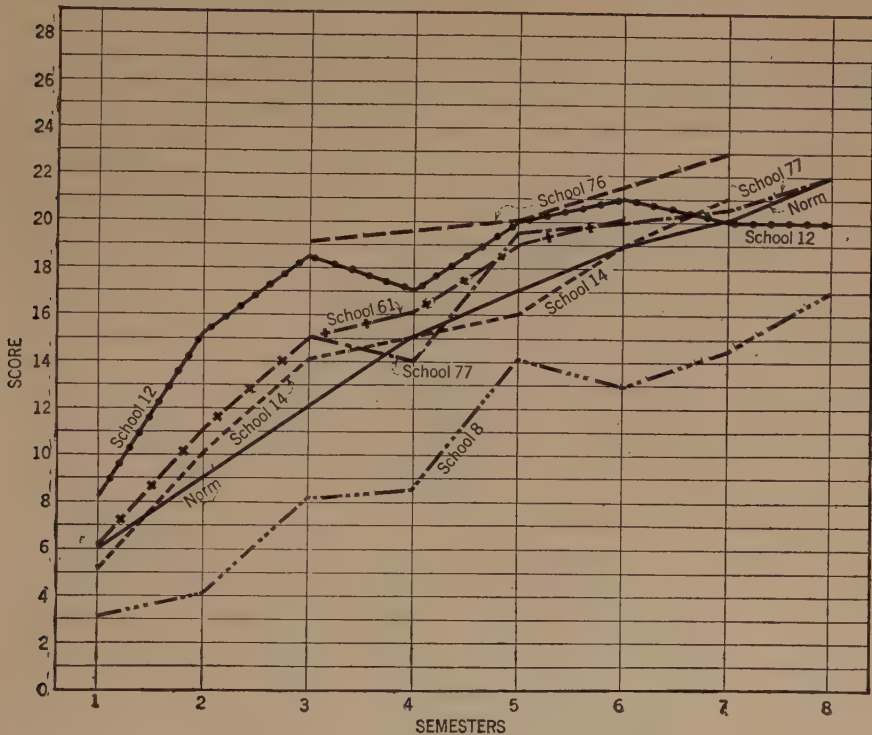


FIGURE 31. — Showing comparative achievement in French silent reading in certain selected schools. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

in vocabulary; School 14 rises to a high level, while 76 and 61 retain their general relative positions except for a considerable divergence in third semester and a sharp retrogression for 76 in seventh semester.

4. The reading test scores are equally interesting. The superior group here consists of Schools 76, 12 (except in seventh and eighth semesters), and 61. School 14 drops to the norm or below at the first, fourth, fifth, and sixth semester levels, rising slightly above for seventh. Reading performance in School 77 almost parallels its grammar curve: low in fourth semester and superior at nearly all other points. Since in Schools 12 and

14 much the same general theory and practice of language teaching prevails, one would necessarily conclude that divergencies in course-content, particularly in the amount of reading practice and in the importance assigned to reading ability as an objective, must, at least in part, be responsible for the sharp contrast in the reading scores in the two schools, a contrast that becomes all the sharper when we recall the manifest superiority of School 14 in terms of grammar scores. At the same time the decided retrogression in seventh and eighth semester scores in School 12 is puzzling, for it is at

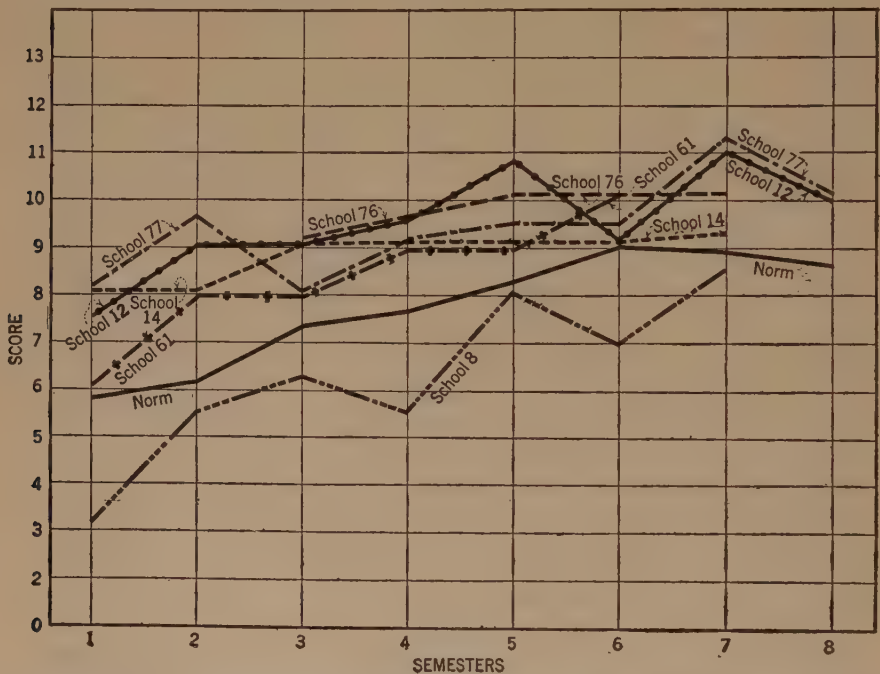


FIGURE 32. — Showing comparative achievement in French composition in certain selected schools. Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 343 (amended).

that stage that the previous reading experience should bear its fullest fruit.¹ It is worthy of note, also, that School 76 retains its high position for the three semester groups that were tested.

5. The curves for composition are highly variable; indeed they appear to be quite capricious in their ups and downs. In this unit of the test — an eight-minute free composition based on a simple picture and scored on the basis of a scale² — School 76, while still maintaining a high place, is

¹ The departmental head in this school is inclined to ascribe this condition to the fact that the pupils are so often tested that they come to make but little effort when a new test is presented. It is noteworthy, however, that this "fed up" attitude, if that is the explanation, is discernible only in fourth year, in which all the scores are relatively inferior except in vocabulary.

² See Henmon, *op. cit.*, p. 34 ff.

equalled or surpassed by School 12 at the fifth and seventh semester stages, and by School 77 at seventh. Schools 14 and 61 are neck and neck at the second, fourth, and fifth semesters, with 14 in the lead in first and third, but showing no progress after the third semester. School 61 rises above 14 in sixth semester. Both are usually well above the norm. The composition record of School 77, while irregular, is excellent. Schools 12 and 14 both drop to the norm at the sixth semester level which in the case of 12 represents the lowest record made by this school in composition from the third semester to the point.

6. In each chart School 76 retains its relatively high position except in seventh semester grammar. It is worthy of note that School 12, which is in the superior class in knowledge of vocabulary, reading ability and composition, makes a mediocre showing in grammar. Contrariwise, School 14, with a superior record in grammar and a fair showing in composition — with the important qualification that the classes show almost no relative gain in writing ability after the third semester — is only mediocre in vocabulary and in reading drops to the norm or below in fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters. Evidently instruction according to the Direct method, even under favorable conditions, does not always produce similar results.¹ School 77, which was relatively only fair in vocabulary and good in reading, made a superior record in grammar, except in fourth semester, and in composition. School 61 yielded superior scores in vocabulary, in grammar, and in composition, and good results in reading. A further fact that arrests attention is the great variableness in classification and in achievement even in these schools which rank relatively high in general teaching conditions and in attainment in modern languages.

The course of study and the method. — The nature of the course for the first two years in School 12 has been set forth at some length in Chapter II (pp. 148-149). The work in School 76 appears to conform to rather conventional college board lines. In the first year the course consists of Fraser and Squair, *New Complete French Grammar*, Part I, and of *Petits contes de France* or a similar easy reader; in the second year the grammar text is continued through an extensive reworking of the verb, forms and syntax, with much practice in prose composition, and the following texts are read: *Eight French Short Stories*, *La Poudre aux yeux*, *Deux contes* (Méry), with some sight reading; in third year the class uses a prose composition book, reads *Contes français* (Buffum's collection), Lamartine's *Scènes de la Révolution française*, *Mlle. de la Seiglière*, and some texts at sight. It is a definitely grammar-translation type of procedure with small attention to oral practice. In certain of the classes a less severe grammatical plan is followed and there is a good deal of spoken practice, but this school in

¹ It may be noted in passing that the relationship between the scores in grammar and in reading in this case harmonizes with the correlations already cited. See Henmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 92 ff.

general emphasizes reading much less than School 12, for example, and concentrates on grammar study with a good deal of attention to pronunciation. It is of interest, however, to record a sentence from the senior master's comment on the classes conducted by the less formal procedure: "In general interest, enthusiasm and fondness for the subject, these boys rate much higher than those in the other courses."¹

Despite the pronounced tendency to a formal type of class work and to comparatively little reading, the method employed in this school is not so easily classified, and for several reasons. In the first place the pupils come from homes where many advantages are provided. "So many of them have special advantages in French," writes the senior master, "either conversational work with French governesses in their early years or introductory work in the sub-preparatory schools before coming to us and taking up the subject here, that it has been very difficult to record the exact number of semesters that they have pursued the study of French." In the next place, their intelligence scores run very high, the classes averaging from 112 to 122 I. Q. In one class of 17 there were five with I. Q. below 110; in another of 13 pupils there were two below 111; in a third class of 13, only one pupil had an I. Q. as low as 106; in a fourth class of 14, the lowest I. Q. except one was 117. Furthermore, the classes are small and homogeneous, the pupils come from a select environment as regards opportunities and interests, their working hours are under the control of the school authorities, who appear to grade quite severely, and practically all are being groomed for college entrance.

According to the report from School 14 an "Eclectic" method is followed "providing for formal grammar, oral practice, translation into French, but no translation into English." No class reading is done during the first year, aside from the material provided in a beginners' book written in French. In the second year about 150 pages are read. Pupils in the upper half of the more advanced classes are encouraged to read about two books each semester and to report on them orally or through a résumé in French. About 325 pages constitute the class reading in third year and 375 in fourth. During the fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters a second grammar book is studied and is reviewed in seventh and eighth semesters. The modern language teaching in this school and in the city system to which it belongs is well organized under competent supervision. Recruits to the staff have a period of training in especially organized courses. The aims as expressed by the director are: "Training in accurate thought processes (the educative value of a foreign language), and ability to read. These two aims are best achieved through a sensible use of oral drill and,

¹ One seventh semester class of this type was tested, containing 12 pupils. It slightly surpassed the other seventh semester group in reading score and fell behind on the other units, but it contained two students with I. Q. below 100, both of whom fell below the class norm.

therefore, as a by-product, the ability to speak and to understand is achieved."

From data supplied by the school, the continuity in the classes appears to be high: 93 per cent of the junior high first-year pupils and 90 per cent of the beginners in senior high continue into second year, while 55 per cent of the second-year pupils continue into a third year.

The data from School 61, a large public high school, which sends a good many students to Eastern colleges, do not throw much light on the good record made by the classes tested from this school. No reading outside the beginners' book is done in first year and not more than 250 pages are read in second year, with no outside reading. In third year the amount of reading done is relatively somewhat larger, perhaps as much as 600 pages. An observer for the Study rated the work all "good," in contrast to the rating "excellent" assigned to Schools 12 and 14. A modified Direct method is followed — some formal grammar in French, some translation and very considerable oral practice, e.g., 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the class time. About 70 per cent of first-year students in French continue in second year, and about 25 per cent to 35 per cent of these into a third year.

The data obtained from School 77, a private school, which, it will be remembered, was good in vocabulary and in reading and superior in grammar and in composition, indicate that these results reflect the teaching emphasis in this school. In the first two years a systematic grammar is worked through, about 150 pages are read in first year and 285 in second — which is more than the average, — and considerable stress is laid on writing French, including résumés. About 480 pages are read in third year and about 800 in fourth year. In addition, some 50 pages are read outside in second semester, 200 in third and fourth, 300 in fifth and sixth and 400 in seventh and eighth. The written work during first and second years includes a good many English-to-French exercises in addition to free composition. The same types of written exercises recur in third and fourth years. Oral work in French is prominent at all stages, occupying from 50 per cent to 75 per cent of the classtime. According to the report of an observer, the foreign language is the classroom medium, to a large extent in second year and exclusively thereafter. The observer was surprised at the readiness with which the two upper classes understood and replied to questions in French, and concluded that the third year can, after all, be made to yield considerable dividends in oral facility. Classes in this school are moderate in size, and the teaching is well done. The pupils could not, according to the observer, be classed as an intellectual élite, although many come from cultured homes and nearly all have a favorable economic background.

It appears, therefore, that the teaching emphasis laid in this school on

grammar and composition is directly reflected in the test scores. On the other hand, since the classes, as in School 12, do more reading at all stages than the average, and because of the apparently successful attention to oral work, one might expect this to be accompanied by the superior attainment in reading ability and in range of vocabulary found in School 12. It is impossible to explain categorically why such was not the case. One may surmise that the stress laid on grammar diverted the teachers' efforts from special attention to training in a recognition vocabulary and in silent reading habits. Here, as in School 14, grammar and oral work are prominent, but School 77 does more reading and gets a better reading score, although one might expect even better scores from classes in which more than the usual amount of reading is done and superior results in oral work are attained.

In the foregoing cases it is impossible to explain in terms of method just why the test results came out as they did. An honest analysis discloses too many ambiguities to justify us in formulating a definite set of conclusions with regard to method. For this it would be necessary to subject all the conditions to a closer scrutiny than is now possible. On the other hand there appears to be nothing in these test scores to contradict the general principle that has been enunciated more than once in various forms during the present discussion, the principle that in a good school, attainment by the pupils is, other things being equal, almost certain to reflect directly the teaching emphasis. In School 14, where grammar and oral work are especially stressed, the tests show superior attainment in grammar and observers report that the oral achievement is of superior quality; in School 12, where oral work, reading and composition are considered important, the reading and composition scores are high and an oral-aural test would also show a high rating; in School 77, which emphasizes grammar, composition, oral work and reading, we observe superior results in all but reading, and honorable returns there. The situations in School 76 and School 8 have already been characterized and performance in School 61 is hard to explain.

The principle that the good teacher usually succeeds best in developing the abilities on which he concentrates his effort is a warning as well as a source of encouragement: it warns good teachers to concentrate on the desirable goals that are most readily attainable for most students under the particular conditions; it indicates that one can not, for example, in the time usually available, safely concentrate on the development of ability to write and to speak grammatically in the expectation that superior reading ability will also develop as a by-product.¹ The arguments in favor of

¹ F. D. Cheydeur in a study of the results gained from administering the American Council French Grammar test, Selective type, to a considerable number of students, concludes that those taught by the

direct teaching are every whit as strong as those for direct learning. A truism? Of course, but, in discussions of method in modern languages, emotion is so often more potent than reason that an occasional well-placed truism gives the impression of being almost a newly discovered truth.

Comparative showing in two groups of schools. — In order to provide readers of this discussion with additional graphic illustrations of how the test scores may be utilized for comparative purposes, two groups of charts have been prepared. These show (1) the median attainment in French on vocabulary, grammar, reading and composition tests in six private schools (Figures 33, 34, 35 and 36) and (2) in the same tests in eleven public schools (Figures 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44). For greater clarity of presentation, the public schools are divided into two groups of five and six each, these groups appearing as separate charts.

Median attainment in six private schools. — Figures 33, 34, 35 and 36 present the growth curves in French in six private schools, of which we have already studied Nos. 12, 76 and 77.

School 36, like 76, is a well known eastern preparatory school with a high reputation, but the French students as represented by the class medians show obviously inferior attainment in vocabulary and in reading and are only fair in grammar and in composition. Schools 66 and 78 are inferior in vocabulary, grammar, and reading. In composition, School 66 is definitely below the norm on the other units, while School 78, which is the demonstration school of a teachers' college, is for the first time as definitely above.

Median attainment in eleven public schools. — Figures 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44 give the medians for eleven public secondary schools which are presented for convenience in two groups, including five (Schools 6, 8, 9, 14 and 25) and six (Schools 30, 50, 56, 60, 61 and 79). We have already examined the curves for Schools 8, 14 and 61.

In vocabulary Schools 6, 8, 25, 60, 63 and 73 are definitely inferior. In grammar the same schools (6, 8, 25, 60, 63 and 73) show a correspondingly low attainment, while the medians of certain classes in Schools 9, 56, 79 and 6 fall below the normal curve. In composition, Schools, 6, 8, 25 (except in sixth and seventh semesters), 50, 56, 60, 63 and 73 and the sixth semester class in 67 fell below the semester norms.

The regularity with which the curves for four of the eleven schools (6, 8, 25, 60) fall where they do in the charts is impressive. It suggests in the first place that the various units of the test supplement one another in an interesting way and that the combined scores do actually reflect

Score

65

60

55

50

45

40

35

30

25

20

15

10

5

0

Nat'l Norm

School 12

" 36

" 66

" 76

" 77

" 78

Semesters 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

FIGURE 33. — Median attainment by semesters in six private high schools in American Council Alpha French vocabulary test, with national norm.

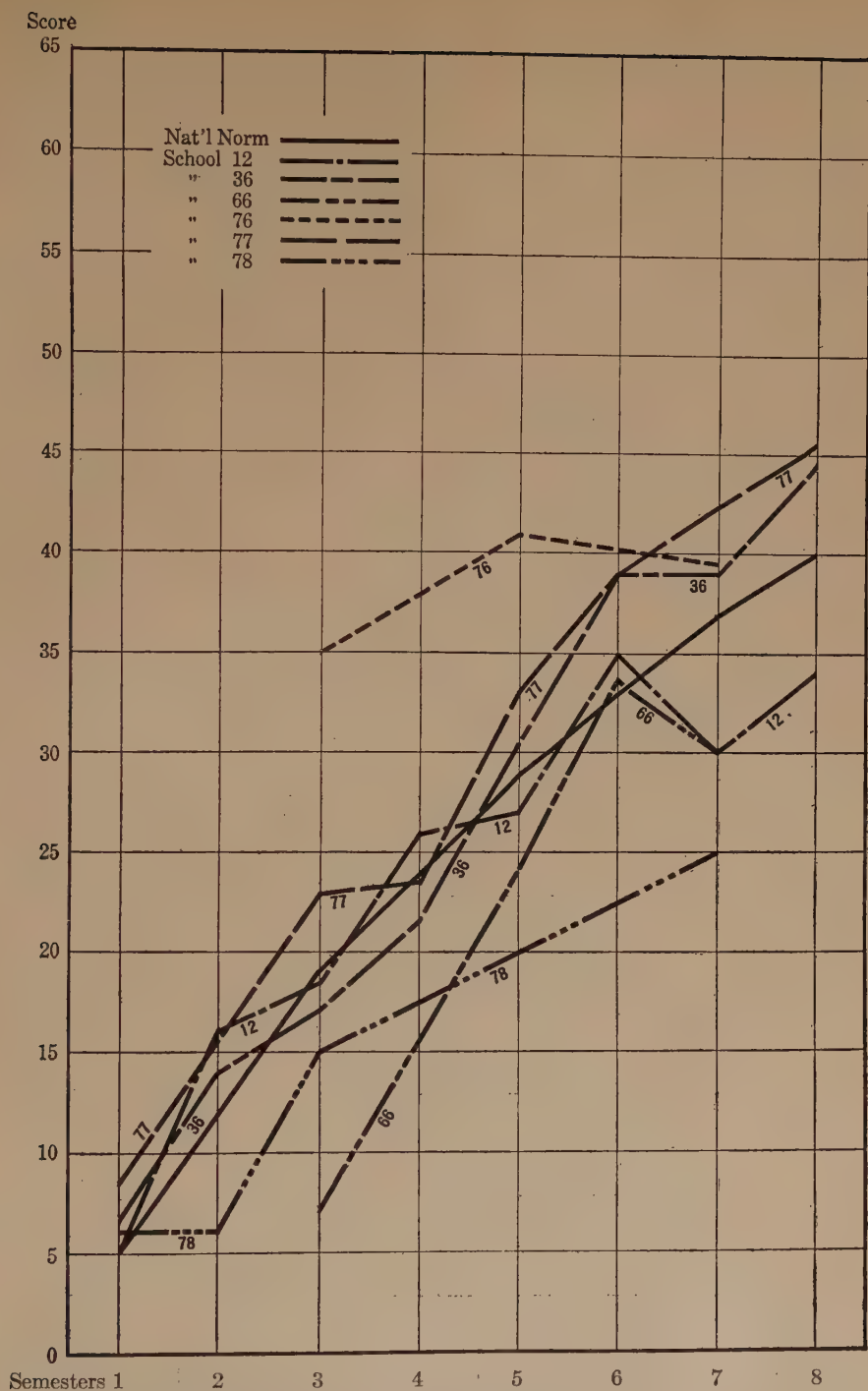


FIGURE 34. — Median attainment by semesters in six private high schools in American Council Alpha French grammar test, with national norm.

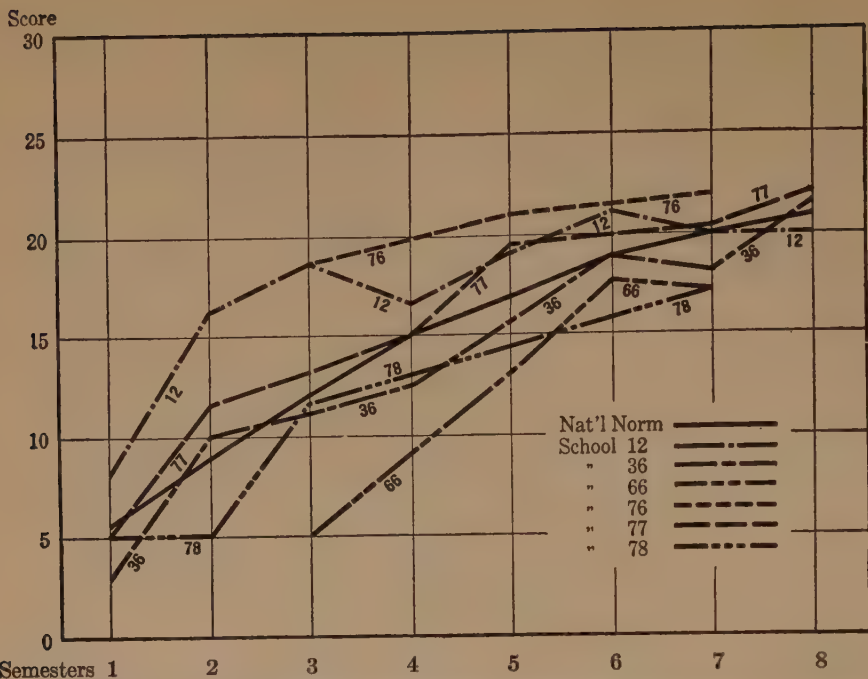


FIGURE 35. — Median attainment by semesters in six private high schools in American Council Alpha French reading test, with national norms.

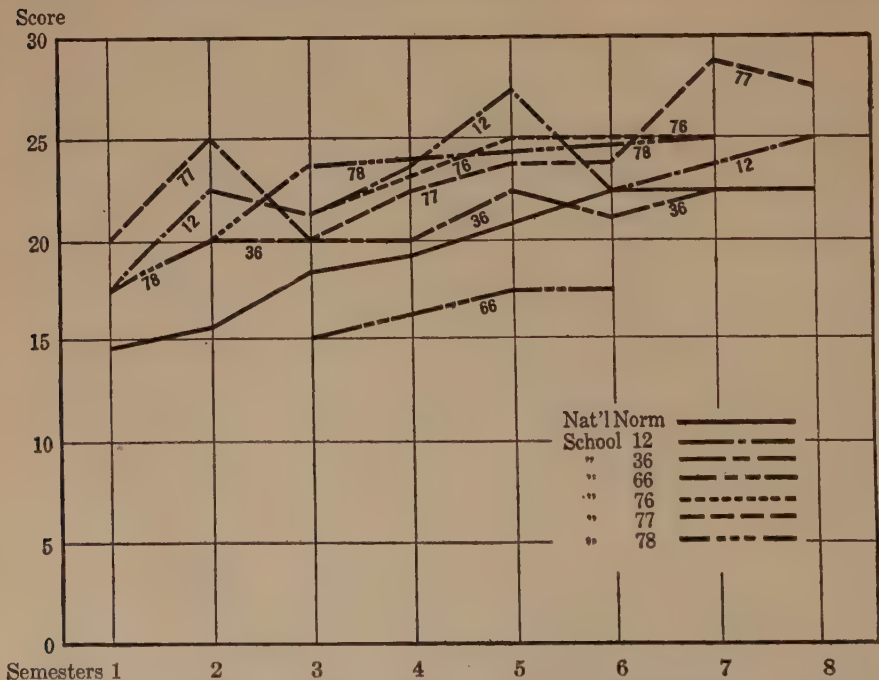


FIGURE 36. — Median attainment by semesters in six private high schools in American Council Alpha French composition test, with national norm.

Score

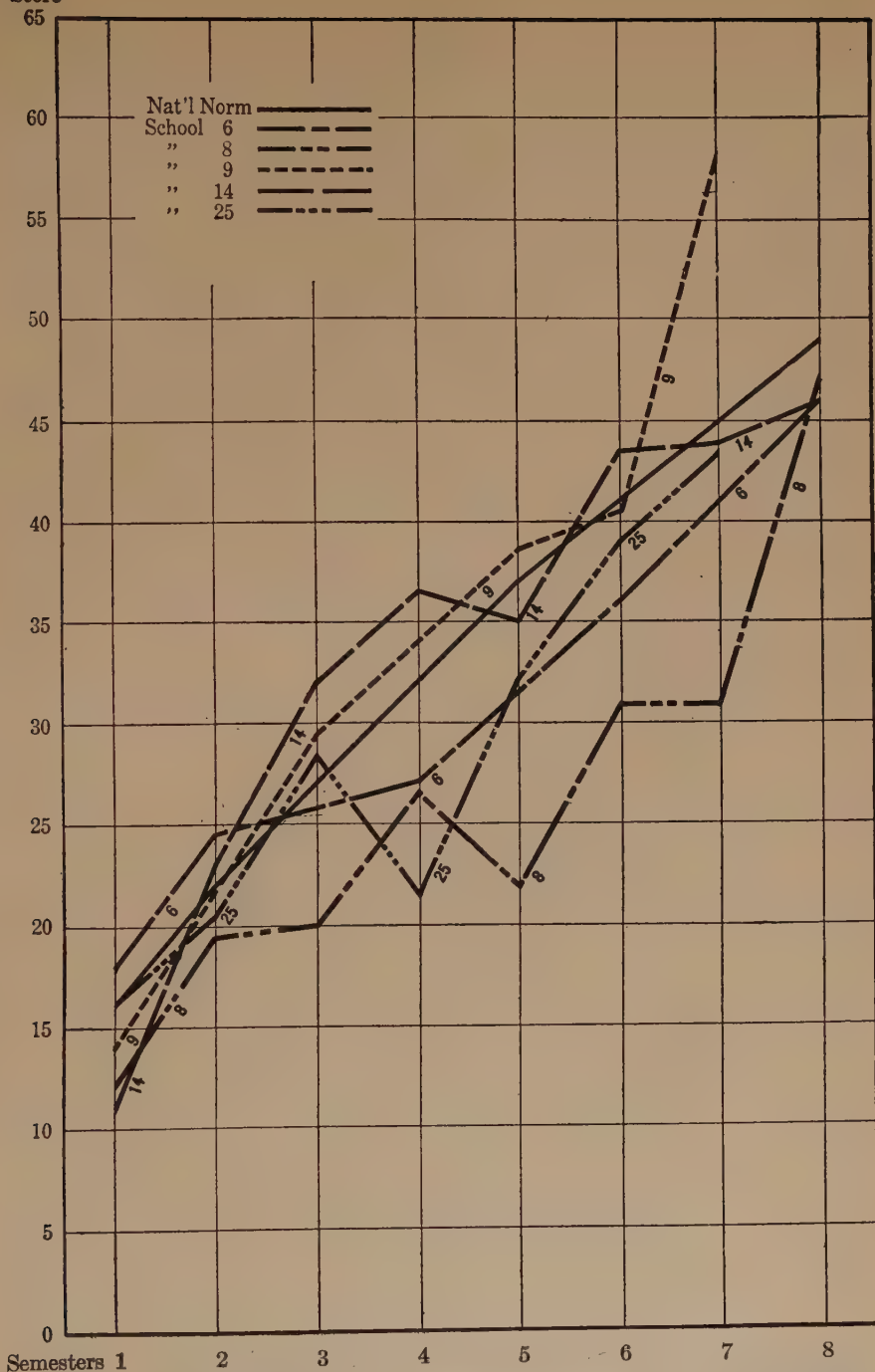


FIGURE 37. — Median attainment by semesters in five public high schools in American Council Alpha French vocabulary test, with national norm.

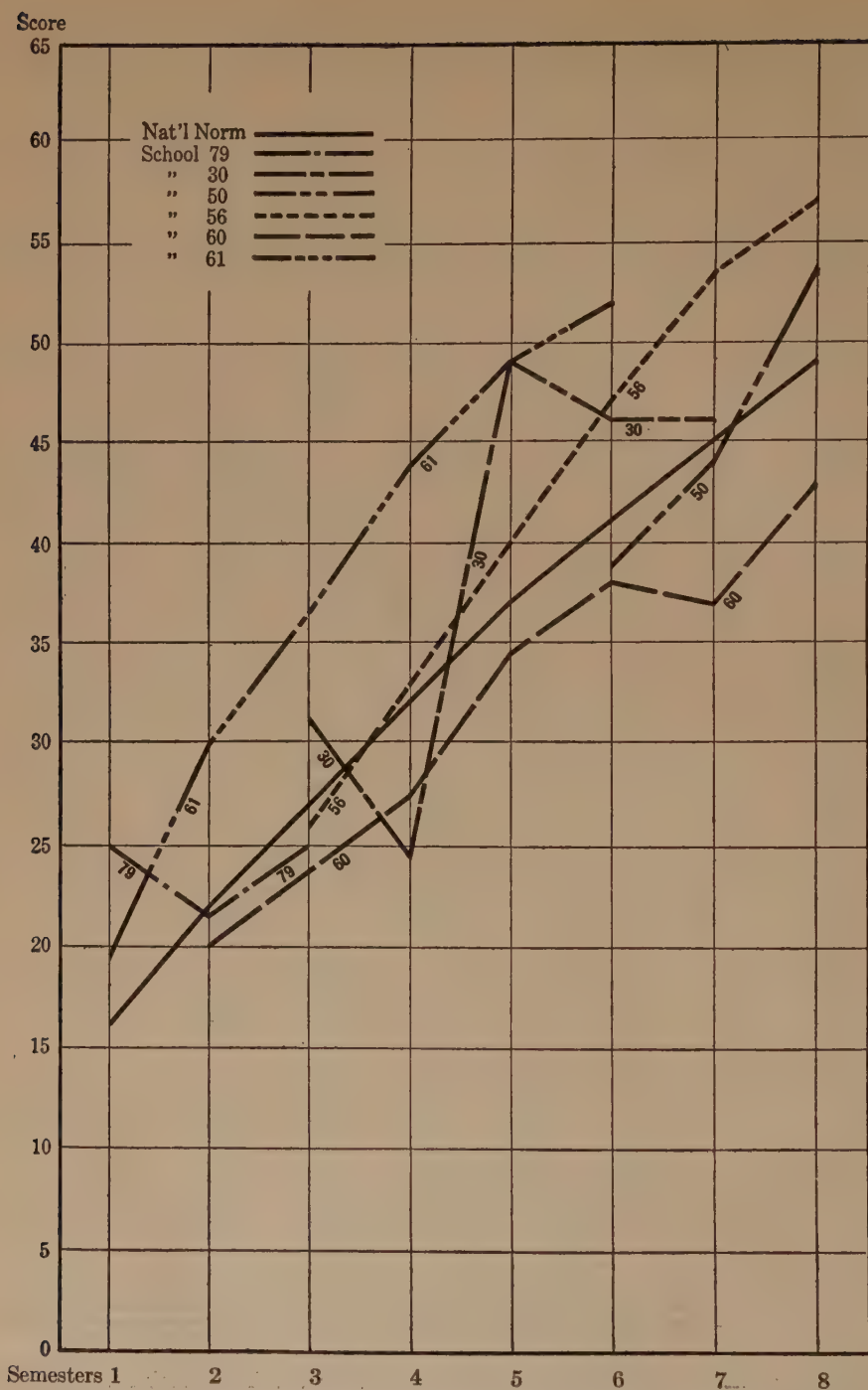


FIGURE 38. — Median attainment by semesters in six public high schools in American Council Alpha French vocabulary test, with national norm.

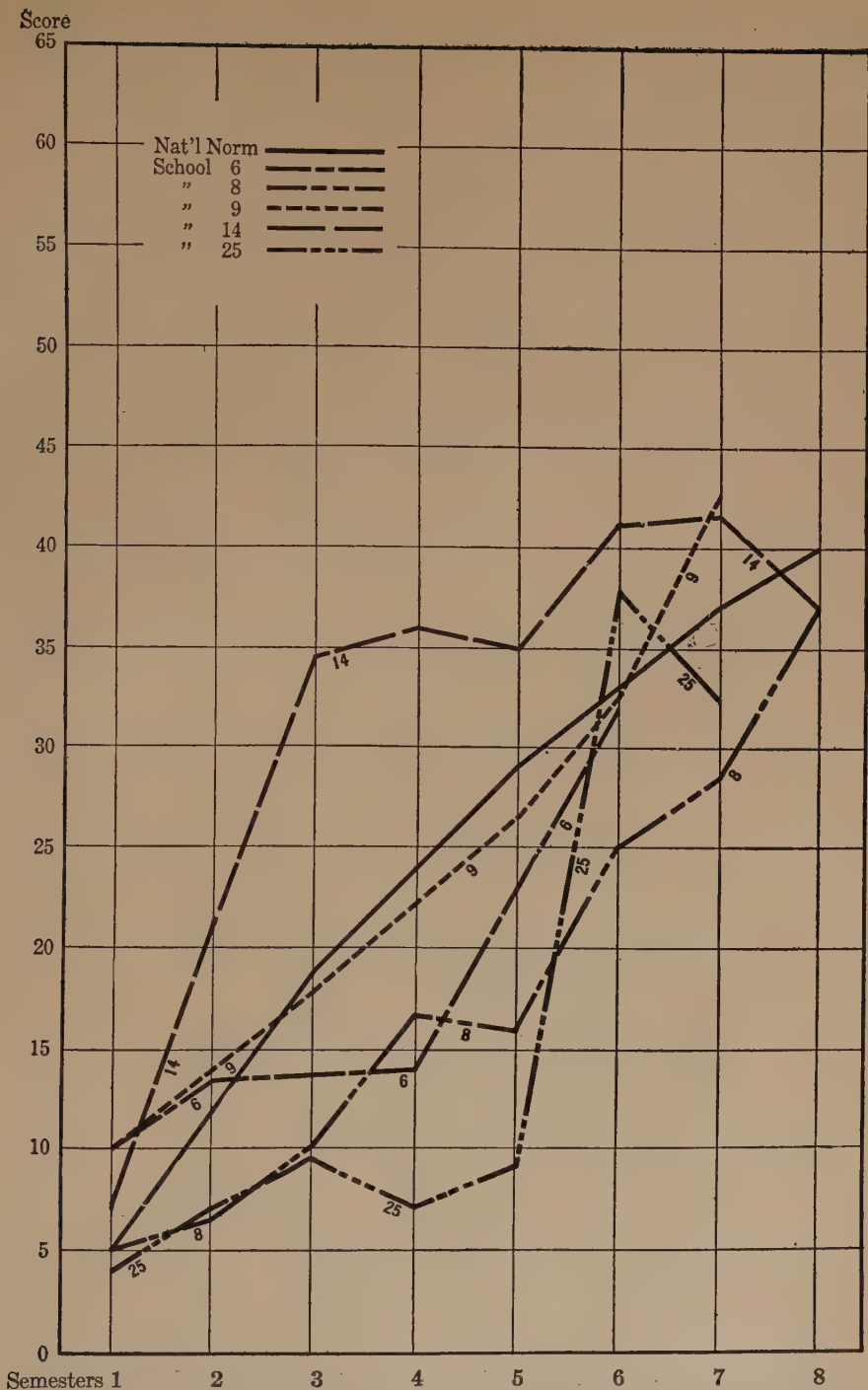


FIGURE 39. — Median attainment by semesters in five public high schools in American Council Alpha French grammar test, with national norm.

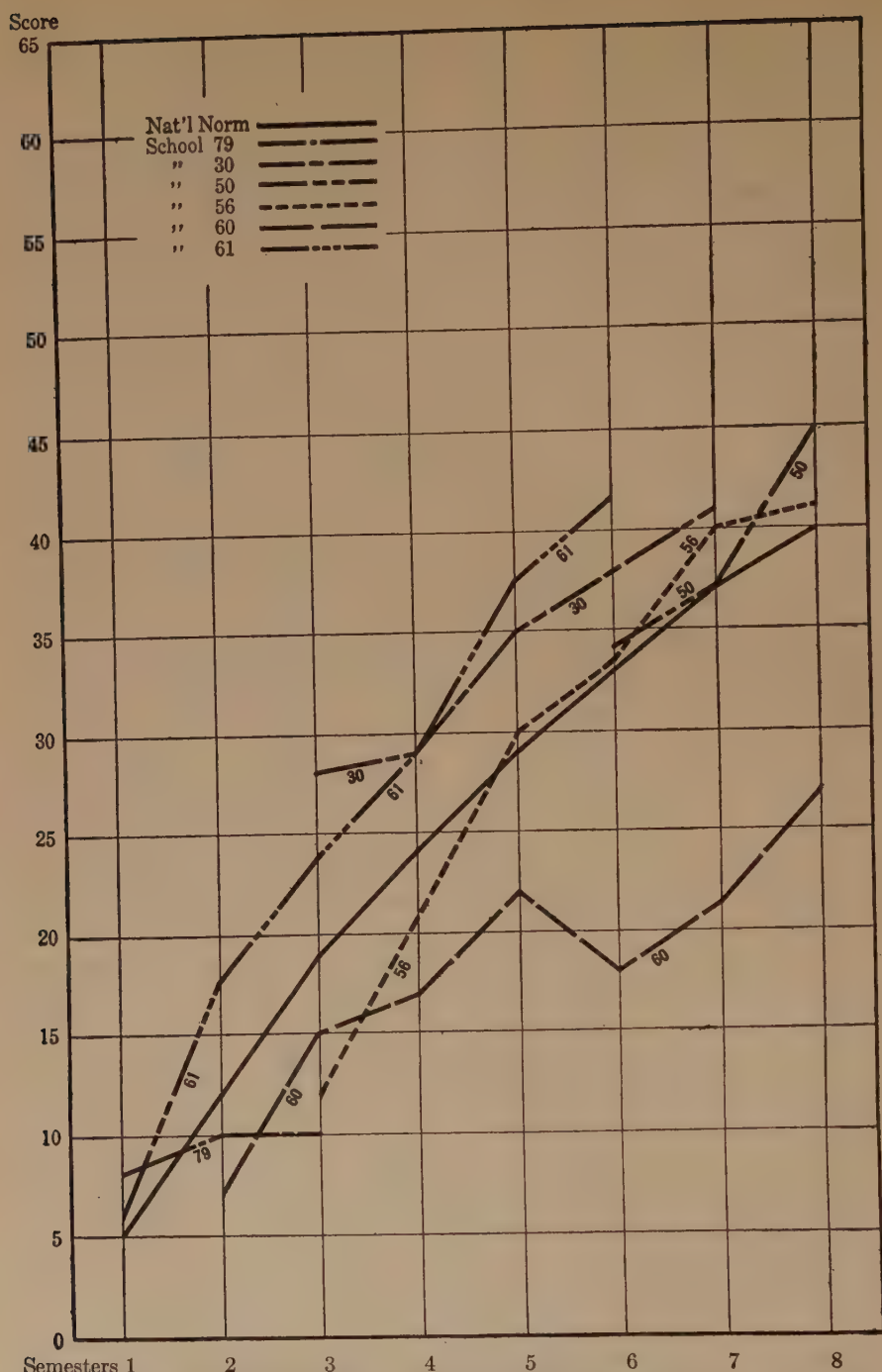


FIGURE 40. — Median attainment by semesters in six public high schools in American Council Alpha French grammar test, with national norm.

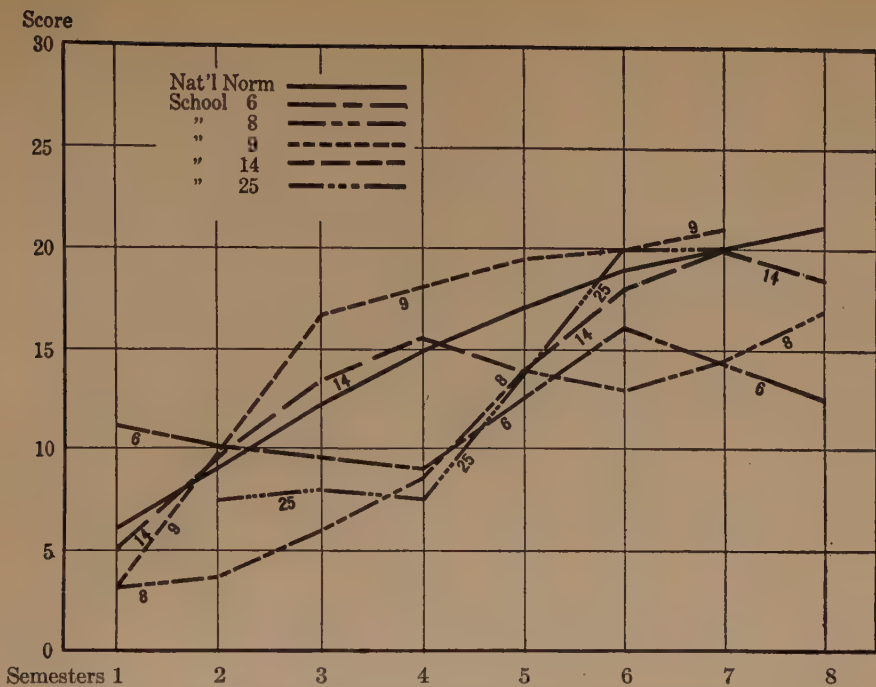


FIGURE 41. — Median attainment by semesters in five public high schools in American Council Alpha French reading test, with national norm.

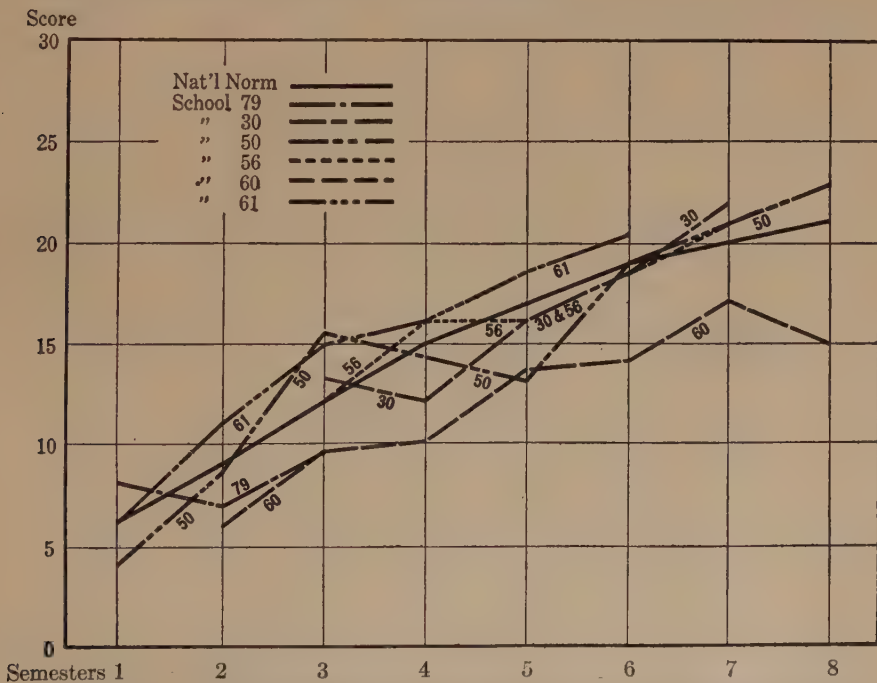


FIGURE 42. — Median attainment by semesters in six public high schools in American Council Alpha French reading test, with national norm.

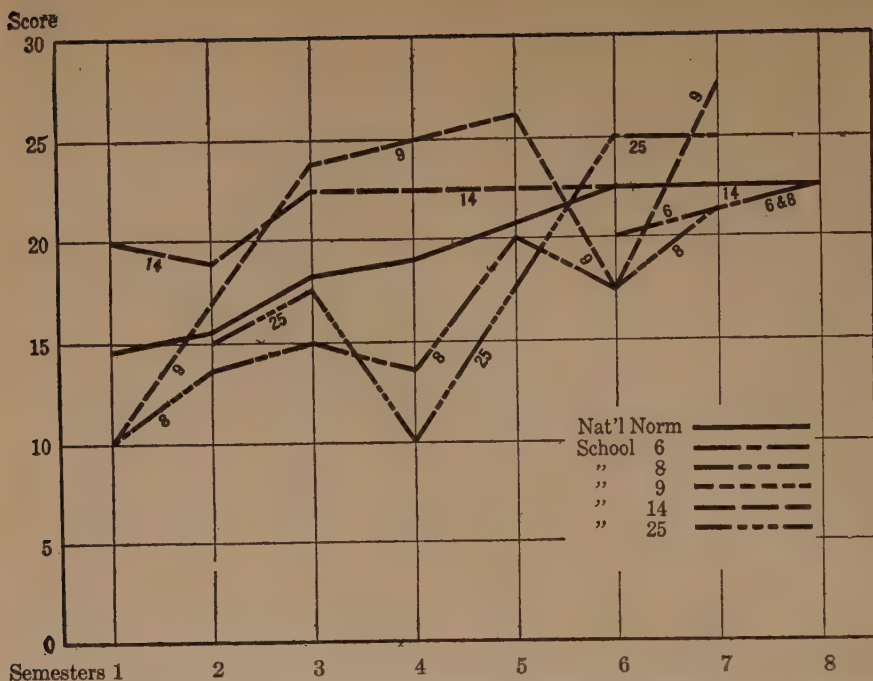


FIGURE 43. — Median attainment by semesters in five public high schools in American Council Alpha French composition test, with national norm.

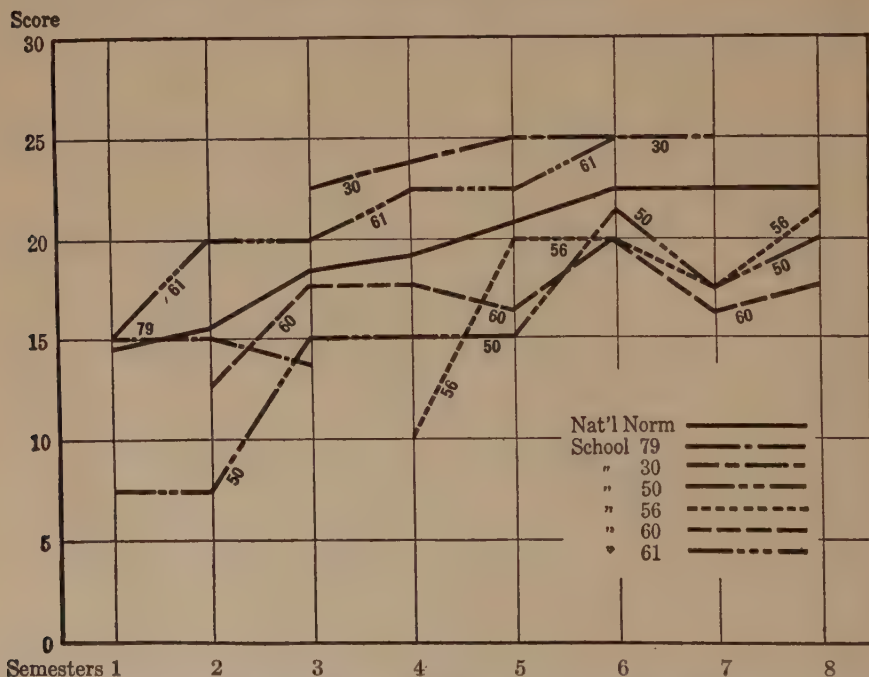


FIGURE 44. — Median attainment by semesters in six public high schools in American Council Alpha French composition test, with national norm.

attainment in French by the pupils tested.¹ Since these schools are located in important urban centers in New England, the Central West, the Middle States and the South, one can not ascribe the unsatisfactory attainment to geographic conditions, although in at least one case (School 25) the pupils come from families in which English has until only recently been a foreign language and still bears but little resemblance in their mouths to "standard" English, while the general background is unfavorable. In the next place this exhibit provides additional proof of the virtual impossibility of knowing what a given school is accomplishing in its language classes unless one goes about it in some such way as was done in this case.

In School 30, curiously enough, in which the Study's representative found rather distressing signs of disorganization and discouragement, four of the classes tested made a superior showing in vocabulary, all of them scored well above the norm in grammar, three fell below in reading and all made a superior showing in composition. The modern language work meets with but little interest and encouragement from the principal's office, but the school has an honorable past, and the tradition of high standards in all fields, coupled with the professional devotion of the modern language teachers has, until now, triumphed over the unfavorable conditions. An exhibit of this sort could not fail to give heart to the teachers in this school and it might arouse even in an indifferent or cynical administration a feeling of admiration for a difficult task well done under adverse conditions.

DIFFICULTY OF ISOLATING THE FACTORS GOVERNING ACHIEVEMENT

In the early stages of the Study the members of the Committee on Investigation confidently expected to initiate a group of experiments the results of which would aid in formulating answers to the seven questions that are enumerated in the introduction to this volume. It soon became clear that conditions are too complex to justify drawing general conclusions from an experiment carried on only for the period of time available to the Committee. Furthermore the lack of any measuring instruments and the prolonged effort necessary to bring these into existence further complicated the situation.² Being thus forced to abandon their hopes of staging

¹ It is of interest to observe the curve of School 79 in the three semesters for which we have test scores. The median for semester 1 is uniformly slightly above the normal curve, while for semesters 2 and 3 the medians are, with equal uniformity, below.

² Some appreciation of the difficulties in the way of securing adequate experimental evidence may be gained by reflecting on the fact that according to Rugg and Counts, *Twenty-Sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, 1927, p. 438, the laboratory schools of the country have not provided measured records of their achievement. "The truth is," they add, "that there are almost no controlled experimental studies now under way in the laboratory schools of America." When one remembers that all or practically all laboratory schools are under the guidance and control of Departments of Education, which are far better equipped for measuring the teaching product of a given situation than any other group, such a statement as this provides eloquent testimony to the difficulty of planning and properly carrying through under actual classroom conditions a controlled experiment, and serves as a slight consolation to the Committee for its shortcomings in this direction.

specific experiments, especially with respect to the effect of various methods, the members of the committee fell back on the hope that a study of conditions in schools of proven excellence in modern language work would enlighten us in regard to the desirable and attainable objectives, a suitable course-content, the best methods of instruction, and proper standards of attainment.

From the preceding pages it is clear that in this hope, also, the Committee's expectations have not been entirely fulfilled. The results of test scores, even when supplemented by the testimony of teachers in regard to aims, course-content and method and, further, by the personal observations of a representative of the Study, have not yielded a sufficiently penetrating analysis of the complex conditions existing in any successful school to enable the Committee to name with confidence all the constant elements in an effective modern language course. We have seen, for example, that the highest yield in terms of the American Council French test came from a school — a highly select school, to be sure — where French is taught in a very conservative manner. What this school would accomplish if College Board standards were altered, and if its excellent resources were applied to the teaching of French by a well organized direct method, no one can say. Both the character of its students and the high percentage of continuation in the subject would be favorable to such a change, but even the most admirable results in this school would prove nothing of great value to the majority of modern language students, who work under quite different conditions. Much the same reflections are applicable to a consideration of the test scores from School 12, in which a well developed Direct method has prevailed for more than a decade. However, the interesting fact that the French students in this school, despite the great emphasis on oral work, find time to do more reading in first and second years than in almost any other school tested and show superior reading power, can not be without some general significance.

The conditions in Schools 14 and 61 are more nearly like those obtaining in the majority of cases. The latter pays more attention to preparation for the College Board examinations than the former, probably doing more translation and formal grammar in third year. The reading experience of its students is little or no greater than in the former, and the city system to which it belongs is perhaps less well organized. Furthermore, the work done in this school made a less favorable impression on an experienced observer. And yet the results of several test administrations indicate that in general attainment it ranks with the best, except with School 76, which is *hors concours*.

So far, then, from leading to clear-cut conclusions, the accessible evidence does not even justify us in maintaining categorically that there is in all cases a direct ratio between attainment in reading and the amount read.

Many students with a broad ideational background, whether gained through the home environment or through considerable and varied reading in the vernacular, doubtless read more easily and more understandingly after a smaller amount of contact with texts in a foreign language than less favored students who have read more pages but who lack the momentum imparted by wider information, by a richer background and by greater reading experience in English.¹

It must not be concluded from what precedes that experimentation in modern language teaching is impossible or that it would be fruitless. More nearly accurate would be the statement that four or five years would be needed, that more refined and more varied testing methods would have to be employed, that closer scrutiny of each individual student — his ability, his interests, his background, his motivation, his methods of study — would be essential, that teaching conditions closely approximating those generally existing would have to be sought, and that one or more experienced observers, working systematically, would have to stay in each center long enough to get the feel of each situation in all its details, with respect to teachers, to students, to administrative conditions and to the general school environment. The present investigation has probably done about all that could be fairly expected of such a large-scale enterprise with so many varied objectives in view. The next step must be in the direction of more intensive study of particular situations, for only so would it appear possible to take into account the numerous and varying factors that condition achievement.

HYPOTHESES IN REGARD TO METHOD

Despite the apparent impossibility of translating the evidence that has been gathered into a clear-cut activity program for the majority of modern language classrooms, something should be gained by an exposition, even though wholly tentative, of the hypotheses in regard to method that have been reached by the Committee on Investigation. Most of what follows has already been expressed or implied in the preceding pages, especially in the proposed restatement of objectives and in the discussion of the content of the modern language course.

¹ But compare the categorical conclusions reached by Hagboldt: "There is a definite relationship between the sum total of pages read and the student's ability in the other language objectives. Comprehension of the written and spoken word, oral and written expression, feeling for form and sentence structure, appreciation of the spirit of the foreign language, — all these objectives are vitally influenced through reading.

"This is the result of our experience in the Junior College of the University of Chicago, where the ability to read the foreign language intelligently is the primary aim. Altogether independent from each other in the manner and aim of our observations, we came to the same conclusion in different classes and languages. . . . The best written theme, the best oral expression, the quickest analysis of a difficult sentence structure, always came from the student who had read with great interest, and therefore intelligently a great deal." *Jahrbuch der Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik*, 1924, p. 1.

Oral work.— In view of the widespread belief that a considerable amount of oral work is desirable, and because of the fact that in most schools known to the members of the Committee in which the best work is being done this element is prominent, it may be inferred that the oral use of the language in class is certainly an accompaniment of the best teaching now being done and may be one of the factors that contribute to its success.¹ At any rate, it may be said with confidence that the ideal implied in this strong tendency toward the spoken use of the language has resulted in gradually raising the standards of preparation for teaching the subject, has brought home to prospective and to practising modern language teachers the importance of the languages in themselves, in addition to their importance as a means for recording in writing the thought and the annals of another people, has led them to present to their classes in varied ways the foreign peoples and their *mœurs* as exponents of highly interesting and significant phases of the life of mankind, and has thus served to raise the modern language teacher to something more of a professional level. He, or she, is, when properly equipped, no longer merely a cultivated person with an interest in the grammar and in the literature of another language, but an expert who has acquired certain skills, abilities and knowledge that only the specialist can acquire and can use properly for giving instruction. The undoubted stimulus thus given to travel and study in foreign countries, to the increasing development in our colleges and universities of instruction in phonetics and of practice in the spoken and written use of the foreign languages and to the establishment of foreign language clubs and houses, is of genuine value in increasing the interest of teachers in their work and in thus augmenting their effectiveness. Unless more precise evidence to the contrary were at hand, it would be a disservice to the profession to urge a kind of classroom procedure that would result in a return to the type of modern language teacher to whom a text in the foreign language presented primarily meanings expressed in a sort of code to which he held the key.

On the other hand, the mere fact that the foreign language is used in the classroom can have no virtue in itself unless other indispensable elements are also present. In a number of poor schools tested by the Study the teachers made a strong point of their oral work, and in some good schools that lay considerable stress on this element the results in ability to read and to write were not distinguished, perhaps because the insistence on oral work, which is supposed to be particularly favorable to accomplishment in these directions, is allowed to absorb too much attention and thus to obscure the reading objective, for it is obvious that the receptive capacity of the student during the elementary period far exceeds his "ac-

¹ Cf. Hagboldt's summary of the evidence on this point supplied by the psychologists in his article in *Jahrbuch für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik* referred to above (p. 269, note).

tive" capacity, and that only in exceptional cases can more than a rather low degree of oral ability be attained at this stage. We are also familiar with the teacher who speaks the foreign language almost unintelligibly and yet tells with much pride of his or her practice of using only the foreign language in the classroom.

Student experiences in the language. — We are then confronted by the task of enumerating the "activities" or the kinds of the things that teachers and pupils should probably do in an elementary course (i.e., the first two years) in order to develop the abilities aimed at. This has been done by implication in the discussion of objectives and of course-content, but it may be well to formulate them more specifically.

The following "activities" are suggested as those in which the students should engage:

1. They will learn how the sounds of the foreign language are made and practise making them until they pronounce syllables and sound groups and sentences intelligibly at least.

2. They will listen to reading aloud and to speaking by the teacher in order both to improve their own pronunciation and to have practice in understanding the language when spoken.

3. They will write from dictation simple sentences and paragraphs taken from material that is familiar.

4. They will learn to distinguish the commonest forms and syntactic constructions in the language and their uses, and will lay the foundation for a more thorough and systematic knowledge by an analytic study of a brief passage from each assignment, identifying and listing the forms and constructions appropriate to the stage of advancement. In the early stages this exercise will aim only to clear up difficulties in the way of reading; later, probably after the first year, it will assume somewhat more conventional form, but with less attention than is customary to the details of usage that take first place when writing and speaking are considered valid objectives for this stage.

5. They will read intensively one or two pages of each assignment with a view to mastering each word and expression.

6. They will learn by hearing, by reading and by speaking, and through English equivalents a limited vocabulary of the commonest words and idiomatic expressions in the written language, a smaller number of words and expressions less common in books but useful in the classroom, and will, through reading, develop the ability to understand in context a much larger number of less common words and idioms.

7. They will read aloud in class for practice in pronunciation and will show their comprehension by replying to questions on the text.

8. They will practice reading silently, both in and out of class, endeavoring deliberately to understand completely sentences and longer passages

without translation into English. They will form the habit of reading each passage at least twice and of reviewing mentally the content after each reading, whether on the basis of content questions or of topics supplied by the teacher or of outlines in English that they make for themselves. When reading they will list all new words and expressions encountered more than once and necessary to the sense of the passage. Lists so made should be thoroughly learned.¹

9. They will do oral and written exercises based on the reading text which will aid in developing the necessary grammatical understanding. Such exercises are supplying appropriate words or endings; substituting plural forms for singular, feminine for masculine, active for passive; shifting the time of a passage from present to future or to past or vice versa; retelling an incident in a different person and the like. The primary purpose of such exercises will be rather to help organize the main linguistic facts than to teach grammar as such or to develop the ability to write in the foreign language.

10. They will reproduce, at first in English and later in the foreign language, passages read aloud or things recounted by the teacher, being held responsible rather for the content than for grammatical details.

11. In addition to class reading of at least 75 pages in first semester, 125 pages in second semester, 150 pages in third semester, and 200 pages in fourth semester, they will read outside of class, and for content and situations only, at least 100 pages in first year and 250 pages in second year of graduated and interesting material.²

12. They will read in English assignments in articles and books designed to increase their knowledge of the foreign country and its people, and of their connections with ourselves, and will present before the class topics that they have found interesting.

13. They will read in translation some of the literary masterpieces in the foreign language that are calculated to interest them and will learn something about the author's life and times.

14. They will note the kinships and contrasts between the foreign language and English in vocabulary, in grammar and in sentence structure, between the new foreign language and any other that they have studied, such as Latin, and will endeavor to apply their observations to material encountered in other connections.

¹ For the technique of developing rapid silent reading ability in the vernacular, see the references to Brooks and O'Brien on p. 156, note. See also the procedure followed by Michael West, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-221.

² These specifications regarding reading are, of course, wholly tentative, and fall far below the amount of reading recommended by educationists who write on the subject. It may well be that the proposals in the text are too conservative and that the figures should be in each case at least twice as large. Before such a program could be realized, however, we should need a greatly increased supply of reading texts prepared in some such way as is suggested on pp. 155-156 above. For the advantage claimed for practice in reading familiar material in a foreign version, see the article by Peter Hagboldt, "An Experiment in Reading Known Material in Beginners' Classes," *Modern Language Journal*, March, 1925.

While any such formulation of a program of classroom "activities" must be incomplete and wholly tentative in detail at the present stage of our knowledge of the processes of language learning, it can not help being suggestive of comparisons and contrasts with the existing situation and should call to the attention of teachers some of the things they must do in order to provide the necessary guidance. A detailed consideration of these comparisons and contrasts would involve the repetition of much that has been already said in the course of this discussion. We shall set down here only such remarks on the subject as appear to summarize the situation.

Implications with respect to classroom procedure. — The method implied in the preceding enumeration is clearly a direct type of procedure in that the chief aims are to develop understanding of the written and the spoken word without the interposition of English, to build up, through the student's various activities in reading aloud, in hearing the language read aloud and spoken, and in reading silently, that language-feeling to which so much importance is attached by the leaders of the Reform movement, and to lay such foundations in word knowledge, in acquaintance with common idioms and with the main linguistic facts, and in skill in making and recognizing the sounds of the language as will permit of much more specific attention to speaking and to writing for their own sake in third and fourth years. It is not *the* Direct method as understood by Schweitzer, for example, who maintains that speaking ability is the first stage to be reached, for this would involve acquiring in less than two years the automatic control over linguistic forms and constructions that is attained, as is generally admitted, by only a very small number at any stage in our secondary course, and an extensive "active" control of vocabulary that is equally as rare.

Naturally, much depends on a definition of terms. What do we usually mean by the "speaking ability" called for in most lists of objectives? We must mean, at least, more than replying to questions on concrete material that has been repeatedly reworked in the class, or than repeating formulas of politeness and those dealing with the weather, or we do not know what we mean. What usually results is that pupils come to understand a good many things that they hear and to indicate this sufficiently well by their replies, albeit somewhat meagerly. In the present discussion this is just what is meant. These replies may be, at first or whenever necessary, in English and, whenever possible, in the foreign language. Monosyllables, gestures, sentences, or even phrases, of the simplest, and not necessarily in strictest conformity with the *Grammaire des grammaires*. The immediate goal is to understand and to register understanding of what is read and heard, with composition, oral and written, kept in the background while the materials are being gathered that will make it possible to produce something like real composition thereafter.

Such a procedure would imply a shift of emphasis in the first year from the usual intensive study of grammar in a first book, supplemented by a few pages of text, which are also studied intensively, to a more deliberate attempt to learn the words and idioms of the language that are most commonly used in written discourse, to supervised practice in direct reading of simple material, utilizing what the student already knows supplemented by inference,¹ to making him perceive how the gradually increasing knowledge of grammatical forms and relations adds to his ability to read and is necessary to any satisfactory self-expression in the foreign language.²

It would imply also the preparation of reading texts in which only the commonest words and idioms occur at first, with a gradually increasing range as the reader gathers enough headway to go over obstacles more easily. Such a gradual introduction to vocabulary is exemplified in all beginners' language texts and in a few reading books now available, particularly in a widely used adaptation of *Sans famille*. The difficulty about the language texts is that the vocabulary for intensive study is often not really common in written discourse, and the reading is insignificant in kind and in quantity. Efforts to supply simple reading matter often result in providing material below the student's level of maturity. Professor West has indicated the way of remedying the latter situation,³ and the various word and idiom lists now available will be of great assistance to the makers of the beginners' language and reading texts of the future.

Does the procedure implied in these pages lessen the teacher's responsibility for acquiring an excellent knowledge of the foreign language, spoken and written? It is difficult to see how one would arrive at an affirmative answer to this question. While there might be somewhat less speaking activity on the part of the pupils in some instances than is now supposed to be the case — the arithmetical demonstration of how little time each individual pupil has for speaking, even under the best conditions, has been often made, — the teacher's obligation to bring the pupil to the point of

¹ See the article, "On Experience in Reading," by Peter Hagboldt, *Modern Language Journal*, XI, pp. 73-78.

² A striking example of how difficult it is for modern language teachers to envisage such a shift is contained in the *Los Angeles Course of Study Monograph* on the modern language course (June, 1922). This document contains an interesting list of "general assumptions." The substance of several of these assumptions is as follows: There is no warrant for teaching high school students to speak and to write a modern language; the basic experience in learning to read a modern language is to read it abundantly; reading should be begun early, a good deal should be done during the first semester, and ten times the present amount of reading should be done; power to understand fully is to be developed through much reading rather than through complete understanding of every phrase encountered from the beginning; composition work is of small value when only a reading knowledge is aimed at; not much technical grammar is needed before reading is begun.

When it fell to the modern language teachers to translate this implied program into a course of study, what do we find? Second and fourth respectively on the list of objectives are "the ability to write, and the ability to speak with approximate correctness." Class reading for first year comprises about 75 pages, and for second year about 175 pages! Furthermore the syllabus of grammatical minima demands that they shall be mastered "for oral and written use," from the first semester on.

³ See *supra*, p. 155.

pronouncing well and of understanding the language when heard would demand a no less expert control of the language than is found now under the most favorable circumstances.¹ At present only a relatively small proportion of our modern language teachers in secondary school — the figures have been given — have had first-hand contact with the foreign country and its people, although the proportion is probably increasing under the impetus of direct method tendencies. If all could travel and study abroad, the effect on our work would undoubtedly be valuable, no matter what classroom methods are employed.

At the same time something additional is needed to supplement the interest and the added linguistic expertness to which a sojourn in the foreign country unquestionably contributes. Entirely aside from such imponderables as personality, as zest for the work, as the capacity to organize material effectively, and as the ability to hold the interest and attention of young people, it is indispensable to have a clear-cut conception of the aims that should be and can be attained by a large majority of the pupils in each particular case, of how the class time shall best be spent with these aims in view, and of the degree of attainment of each objective which is fairly to be expected at each stage of the course. One may follow obediently a method that leads to certain ways of spending the time, excellent ways in themselves, and may give but little thought to other considerations. In some cases the outcome of such a trustful procedure may not be bad, but it is not unreasonable to maintain that the distressing situation revealed above with respect to the attainment of objectives and the organization of classes is due, in part, to the general failure of teachers to test their aims by their results and *vice versa*, and to their tendency to regard method as something apart, something existing of itself, and as a matter of individual choice, like one's books or one's clothes.

The weakness of such an assumption has been amply demonstrated. While it is more important to follow *a* method than any particular method — and method varies from individual to individual, no matter by what name it is called, — it is of importance to spend most of our teaching effort in giving practice in the things that we most want our students to be able to do. The manifestly tentative suggestions offered in the preceding paragraphs regarding the way the time may be spent in the modern language classroom will have served their purpose if they do no more than bring this principle squarely before those members of our profession who are concerned with something more than with "covering" a given number of topics each semester, or with preparing a small number of pupils to pass examinations. While the conclusions arrived at in the course of the present discussion are almost certainly incomplete and may even prove to be, in

¹ Contrast the more drastic reduction of oral work suggested for shorter courses by the Committee on Foreign Languages in the Junior High School, *supra*, Chapter II, p. 146, note.

certain respects, erroneous, it is difficult to see how a careful consideration of the evidence summarized in these pages will not lead to the conviction that only by a definite reorientation can the modern language teaching in the secondary schools of the country and in the first and second years in college be made to yield in larger measure those values that our pupils have a right to expect. In any event, we may be certain that the teachers of modern languages can not and will not be content until they discover ways of making their efforts yield for larger numbers of their students larger returns in terms of knowledge of the languages.

SUMMARIZING CONCLUSIONS

1. The fundamental consideration in determining the choice of a teaching technique in modern languages is that the activities in which teacher and students engage must be such as to give the students the maximum amount of practice during the period of study in doing the kinds of things that are included in the objectives approved for a given teaching situation. A method can be considered appropriate only when this principle is observed and when other important factors are kept in mind, such as the linguistic equipment of teachers, their capacity to organize the material and to conform intelligently and eagerly to the guiding principles of a given procedure, and the other general conditions prevailing in any given teaching situation.

2. Despite a certain amount of experimentation that has been done, there is little concrete and wholly trustworthy evidence to show to what extent a given classroom method is, in itself, productive of superior or of inferior results. At the same time, the distinct trend of secondary school teachers away from translation as a means and as an end, and toward some form of "direct" approach to the thought contained in a foreign text, is marked, and has apparently been beneficial in arousing more interest in students and in causing teachers themselves to learn the foreign language more effectively.

3. There is a widespread belief among secondary school and college teachers that inability on the part of members of the profession to speak the languages they teach is the most important single cause of poor results in developing oral ability in the classroom. The fact that a very large majority of the modern language teachers in the United States have neither traveled nor studied in countries where the languages are spoken is a factor of importance in this connection. While this situation has a very direct bearing on the extent to which American schools in general may safely adopt the Direct method as commonly conceived, it also lays on college departments a heavy obligation to train prospective teachers more effectively to pronounce, to understand, and to speak the foreign language,

and upon prospective and practising teachers the responsibility of developing themselves in this direction by study here and abroad.

4. So many factors are involved in every teaching situation that none of the various efforts made by the Study to secure unequivocal testimony in regard to the comparative results from different teaching methods were wholly successful. In most classes in which the best results were observed the foreign language was largely used, but good oral attainment was not always accompanied by success in reading and in writing. In all the superior schools the organization of the work, the kind of supervision in the departments, the quality of the teaching, and administrative coöperation were superior. The results of test administrations in the better schools warrant no entirely clear-cut conclusions in regard to method when considered apart from other factors. They do, however, give definite support to the view that there is a direct ratio between teaching emphasis and the results obtained in terms of grammar or of composition or of reading.

5. There is great need of careful experimentation to determine more definitely the effect upon learning a foreign language of the various procedures as applied under typical American school conditions. Especially is this true with respect to the relative effect upon reading power during the elementary stage of "intensive" study of a small amount of reading material, as now generally practised, as compared with more abundant "direct" reading experience, accompanied by less detailed study of grammar and less written practice in translation from English and in reproduction in the foreign tongue. With the aid of carefully controlled experimentation it should be possible to test more thoroughly the theory that a procedure of the latter kind aids the student to develop more quickly the fluency in immediate understanding of the printed page that is essential for reading with ease and enjoyment.

The Committee on Investigation has arrived at certain other conclusions of a general nature, although based on less specific data than those that have been formulated at the close of the several chapters of this discussion.

1. Principals and administrators should exercise greater care in selecting modern language teachers with a suitable training. It is better to eliminate modern language instruction from a school than to retain the subject at the price of ineffective teaching by poorly equipped instructors.

2. The work of modern language teachers in the classroom makes heavy demands upon their energies, especially if they endeavor to use the foreign language in the early stages of the course. Their burden of papers to correct, of conferences with individual students for remedial purposes, and of successful guidance of language clubs and dramatic productions, adds so considerably to the drain on their physical resources as to restrict

in a detrimental way their opportunities for making fresh contacts through reading and study with the literature and the history of the foreign country. Their teaching load should be lightened in the interest both of their teaching and of improved scholarship.

3. Teachers of modern languages find it of the greatest value to travel and study in the foreign country, in order to increase their ability to use the language and to develop a sense of more intimate contact with the country and the people. It is, however, often impracticable for them to do this unless school authorities give aid by a policy of leaves of absence on full or part pay, or by making some other financial adjustment.

4. Schools will encourage the development of reading power in modern languages if they provide suitable library facilities for free and assigned reading, in which should figure newspapers, illustrated magazines, books of travel, history, science, and fiction.

5. Modern language departments should be provided with maps, pictures, posters, and, where possible, with lantern slides, a phonograph and records, and similar apparatus.

6. Very few school principals or higher officials are drawn from the ranks of modern language teachers. As a result teachers in our field too often have a feeling that administrative officers are less well informed about their problems than about those of other departments. If principals took this into account, and showed their appreciation of the effort that modern language teachers are now making to fulfill their task in a professional spirit, the results would be educationally beneficial.

7. As it will appear from even a hasty reading of the pages of this report, the problems pertaining to the teaching and learning of modern languages that have not been adequately studied are still numerous and important, despite the efforts of the Committee on Investigation of the Study. It would be of the greatest advantage to future work in the field if a research institute or some similar agency were established to continue in specific directions this inquiry, which in the nature of the case has been necessarily concerned largely with surveying the general field, for only thus could the problems be discovered and delimited.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

PROBLEMS FOR INVESTIGATION BY THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

ISSUED MARCH, 1925, AS "BULLETIN NO. 2."

The Committee on Direction and Control of the Modern Foreign Language Study assumes provisionally as the four *immediate* objectives of instruction in the modern foreign languages a progressive development —

1. Of the power to read the foreign language.
2. Of the power to understand the language when spoken.
3. Of the power to speak the language.
4. Of the power to write the language.

The Committee posits further the following as *ultimate* objectives which may possibly be attained through the study of the modern foreign languages —

1. Ability to read the foreign language with ease and enjoyment.¹
2. Ability to communicate orally with natives of the country whose language has been studied.
3. Ability to communicate in writing with natives of the country whose language has been studied.
4. Increased ability to pronounce and understand foreign words and phrases occurring in English.
5. Increased ability in the accurate and intelligent use of English.
6. Increased power to learn other languages.
7. A more effective realization of the importance of habits of correct articulation and clear enunciation.
8. Increased knowledge of the history and institutions of the foreign country and a better understanding of its contribution to modern civilization.
9. Increased ability to understand ideals, standards and traditions of foreign peoples and Americans of foreign birth.
10. Development of literary and artistic appreciation.
11. Development of a more adequate realization of the relation of the individual to society.

¹In arranging the objectives, the question of relative importance has not been considered.

12. A clearer understanding of the history and nature of language.
13. Increased ability to discern relationships and make comparisons between subjects allied in form and content.
14. Development of habits of sustained effort.
15. The ability to make prompt and effective use of foreign discoveries and inventions.
16. Development of social adaptability through increased personal contacts with natives of other countries.

This statement of immediate and ultimate objectives constitutes a challenge to teachers of modern languages and to students of secondary education and educational psychology. The determination of the extent to which they are realized and realizable requires comprehensive experimentation and testing. In order to render the objectives more tangible and to focus attention upon specific studies which may be undertaken experimentally or statistically by teachers of the modern languages or by students of education, the Committee has formulated a list of problems for investigation and research. It is hoped that modern language departments in colleges and universities and departments of education will give consideration to these problems in the assignment of master's and doctor's theses. It is also hoped that teachers of the modern languages and members of departments of education will coöperate with the Study in planning their own researches. The Study welcomes correspondence concerning any of the problems listed or others that may be undertaken.

SUGGESTED PROBLEMS FOR MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

A. FACTORS AND CONDITIONS IN ACHIEVEMENT

1. The effect on achievement of the age at which modern foreign language is begun.
2. The effect on achievement of the method used.
3. Variations in achievement due to general intelligence.
4. Variations in achievement due to the size of the school and to differences in teaching conditions.
5. Variations in achievement in classes taught by natives and by teachers trained in America.
6. The influence of previous foreign language study on achievement.
7. Comparative study of achievement by pupils beginning a modern foreign language in secondary school and in college.
8. The size of classes and resulting variations in achievement in foreign languages.
9. Variations in achievement in language classes meeting three, four, five, or more times weekly.
10. Comparative study of achievement in classes in which extensive reading is practised and in classes that read less and do more formal linguistic work.
11. Comparative achievement in modern language classes in the United States, in Canada and in European countries.

12. Comparative study of achievement in modern language classes in experimental schools and in ordinary schools.

13. Comparative study of achievement in city school systems having supervisors of modern foreign languages and in those without special supervision.

14. Interrelations of different language abilities and variations in achievement due thereto.

15. The effect of a general language course on progress in a modern foreign language.

16. The effect of varying periods of disuse on the abilities in modern foreign languages.

17. Increments of progress in modern language study by successive semesters.

18. Eye movements in reading foreign languages at different stages of progress.

19. The effect on ability to read modern foreign languages of oral practice vs. practice in translation.

20. The effect of varying distributions of class time between oral work, translation, free composition and grammatical drill.

21. Comparative study of achievement in classes: (a) where much attention is paid to the acquisition of a good pronunciation; (b) where little attention is given to pronunciation.

22. Comparative study of achievement where two modern foreign languages are begun: (a) at the same time; (b) at an interval of a year; (c) at other intervals.

23. A study of the present practices and the validity of present methods of evaluating high school units by colleges and universities.

B. PROBLEMS IN TESTING ACHIEVEMENT

24. Comparative study as to validity and reliability of the true-false type, the Thorndike-McCall type and the picture-supplement type of silent reading or comprehension tests in each of the foreign languages.

25. Comparative study of functional grammar test technique (correction of errors, completion, multiple choice with and without English translations and true-false).

26. Comparative study as to validity and reliability of vocabulary test techniques: translation, selective type (English), selective type (foreign language), with and without context.

27. Standard tests of speed of reading each foreign language.

28. Correlations between functional grammar tests and formal grammar tests.

29. Interrelations between different abilities in modern foreign languages and their bearings on achievement tests.

30. The validity of measuring ability in pronunciation by the ability to detect errors in pronunciation.

31. Composition scales in each of the foreign languages for rating written work, and their reliability.

32. Composition scales for rating free compositions at the various levels in college entrance examinations.

33. Standardization of test material for measuring ability to understand the foreign language when spoken.

34. Standard tests of ability to speak each of the foreign languages.
35. Standard tests in the knowledge of the civilization of the foreign country: its history, its literature, and its institutions.

C. PROGNOSIS TEST PROBLEMS

36. The validity and reliability of available prognostic tests.
37. A study of cases of genuine linguistic disability or incapacity not accompanied by low general intelligence.
38. A comparison of prediction on a basis of a general intelligence test, of school marks in other subjects and of special aptitude tests.
39. A critical survey and analysis of the literature on the psychological processes involved in learning a foreign language.
40. The correlations and partial correlations between abilities in foreign languages and other school subjects, and their bearings on prognosis.

D. CURRICULUM PROBLEMS

I. VOCABULARY

41. Minimum vocabularies at various stages for each modern language.
42. Vocabulary tests on a basis of frequency for each modern language.
43. Critical examination of the size and character of vocabularies in widely used grammars and textbooks at the various stages.
44. The learning process in acquiring a vocabulary.
45. Critical study of the various ways of building vocabulary.
46. Effect on recognition vocabulary in the native and in the foreign language of systematic attention to etymology.
47. Effect on vocabulary building of extensive vs. intensive reading.
48. Comparison of active and of passive vocabularies.
49. Comparative study of the size and character of vocabularies in first-year books and grammars in French, German, Italian, Latin and Spanish.
50. Frequency of occurrence in English of foreign words and phrases (especially French).
51. Comparative study of vocabularies in typical first-year courses with those in second-year courses.
52. An analysis of the vocabularies of the first 1000 or the first 2000 words in French, German, Italian, Spanish, English and Latin to discover similarities and relationships.

II. GRAMMAR

53. Syntax frequency lists based on current grammars and on representative literary and popular prose.
54. Collection of data as to grammars most widely used and the grammatical topics stressed in the classroom.
55. Comparative effectiveness of learning grammar formally and functionally.
56. Increments in the knowledge of grammar at intervals of a semester or of a year.
57. Comparative study of the effectiveness of direct and of grammar-translation methods on the knowledge of functional and of formal grammar.

- 58. A study of the frequency of grammatical errors in student exercises.
- 59. The variability in grammar and in composition texts in the high school and in the college.

III. READING

- 60. The nature and amount of modern foreign languages read at various stages in American and in European schools. Relative attention to (a) *realia*; (b) geography, history, and institutions of foreign countries; and (c) literary material.
- 61. Comparative study of texts and reading assignments in modern foreign languages where foreign language study is begun in the first year in high school, in the third year and in college.
- 62. The selection and gradation of reading material for the various years of the foreign language course.
- 63. The variability of reading assignments and of texts in college courses in each of the modern foreign languages.
- 64. The variability of reading material used in high school courses in each of the modern foreign languages.
- 65. The methods used by institutions in defining "ability to read French and German" where such a requirement is in effect.
- 66. A comparative study of courses in modern foreign languages in 1890, 1900, 1910 and 1920; for example, in states or cities where records are available.
- 67. The reading of modern foreign languages after graduation from college by those not teaching the languages.
- 68. The knowledge of French, German, or Spanish history, literature and institutions possessed by those who have studied the respective languages in comparison with those who have not.
- 69. Variability in the amount of reading in so-called extensive reading courses.

IV. TRANSLATION

- 70. Value of practice in translation for developing reading power.
- 71. Interrelations between the ability to translate from the native into the foreign tongue and from the foreign into the native tongue.
- 72. Translation as a testing device vs. translation as a means of teaching the foreign language.

V. PHONETICS

- 73. A study of present-day methods of phonetic drill.
- 74. Relative progress in learning to pronounce: (a) in classes conducted by the phonetic method (physiological explanations and the use of phonetic transcription); (b) in classes where pronunciation is learned by imitation.
- 75. A study of the actual amounts of practice in pronunciation that students get in typical classes in each foreign language.
- 76. Ability in pronunciation developed by native teachers as compared with teachers trained in America.
- 77. Experiment with the use of phonograph records in developing ability in pronunciation.
- 78. Variations in the time allotted to oral work.

79. The effectiveness of phonetic drill in correcting cases of particularly poor ability in pronunciation.
80. Methods of developing correct intonation in speaking and in reading the foreign languages.
81. Frequency of characteristic errors in pronunciation in each foreign language.

E. LEARNING PROBLEMS

82. The learning curve in acquiring ability to read a foreign language with daily or weekly record of growth in vocabulary and in ability to read.
83. The learning curve in acquiring ability to understand the spoken foreign language with weekly records of progress.
84. The learning curve in acquiring ability to read and speak a foreign language where the subject is living abroad.
85. The learning curve in acquiring ability to write a foreign language (e.g., five-minute compositions at weekly intervals with records of amount written and of decrease in errors).
86. The most effective distribution of time in learning a foreign language.
87. The effect of various incentives on progress in learning (e.g., travel abroad, preparation for foreign service, specific college requirements, etc.).
88. The effect on progress in ability to read of having students at regular intervals record the amount read in a given time.
89. Plateaus in the learning curve for the acquisition of ability to read a foreign language.
90. A study of the strength of association from English to the foreign language and from the foreign language to English under different methods and conditions.
91. Study-habits of pupils in preparing reading lessons in modern languages.

F. METHODS

92. A study of the methods employed by successful teachers in building vocabularies (lists, drills, oral composition, etc.).
93. A study of methods used by exceptionally successful teachers in teaching pronunciation.
94. Methods employed to develop the ability to understand a spoken foreign language.
95. Free composition vs. translation into the foreign language as a means of developing the ability to write a foreign language.
96. A study of methods used where training for foreign correspondence is the specific aim.
97. A study of frequency of errors in vocabulary, reading, speaking and writing the modern foreign languages.
98. A study of method as adapted to students at different ages (e.g., at the secondary school and at the college age).
99. A study of the relative gain in the various abilities (e.g., to read, to pronounce, to write, to understand, to speak) as a result of one or more types of method.
100. The teaching of syntax inductively vs. the teaching of rules systematically.
101. A study of prevailing modern language methods.

G. TRANSFER VALUES

102. The effect of the study of the modern foreign languages on English.
103. The effect of the study of Latin on progress in the modern foreign languages.
104. The effect of the study of modern languages on the knowledge of English grammar.
105. The effect on English vocabulary of training in the modern foreign languages.
106. The effect on speed of reading in English of habits of translation formed in acquiring a foreign language.
107. The effect of modern foreign language study on literary appreciation in English.
108. A study of the quality of English in translation for college entrance examinations, with due allowance made for differences in general intelligence either on the basis of an intelligence test or of an average of scholarship marks in high school in all subjects taken.
109. The effect of the study of modern languages on interest in and the attitude toward foreign countries and peoples.
110. A study of examination papers, to determine what objectives the examiners seemed to have in mind when choosing and formulating questions.

H. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

111. Modern language entrance requirements: (a) in liberal arts courses; (b) in other courses.
112. Modern language requirements for a bachelor's degree: (a) in liberal arts courses; (b) in other courses.
113. Mortality in foreign language classes in high school and in college, and the causes.
114. Foreign language courses in junior high school and their relation to language courses in senior high school and in college.
115. Practices in sectioning classes on a basis of preliminary tests, either of intelligence or of ability in the foreign language.
116. Number of students majoring in modern foreign languages as compared with other subjects and the number of such students preparing to teach.
117. Standards and practices in measuring reading knowledge of French and German for candidates for the doctor's degree.
118. The number of college students studying no foreign language, one, two, three, or more foreign languages in high school and in college.
119. Motives prompting high school and college students to elect foreign languages.
120. A study of the failures in modern foreign language courses and of the regulations governing these in different institutions.
121. Reactions of students to the kind and character of instruction given in modern languages.
122. The influence of the college entrance board examinations on modern language curricula and methods.
123. A study of examination papers written by candidates for teachers' licenses and certificates in modern languages.

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF PROJECTS FOR RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENT ORGANIZED
UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE MODERN FOREIGN
LANGUAGE STUDY AND THE CANADIAN COMMITTEE
ON MODERN LANGUAGES

The list shows only those projects which have been completed or have progressed so far that completion is merely a matter of time. All studies which are listed as "In MS" are in the files of the Modern Foreign Language Study.

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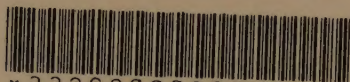
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